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RELIGION · THEOLOGY · PHILOSOPHY  
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## Editorial Comments

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*The following brief note has been received from the Editor, Dr. Leslie F. Church: 'It is a great grief to me that I am not well enough to write my tribute to that great man, Hugh Bourne, who has been, since boyhood, one of my heroes'.*

*The space usually assigned to Editorial Comments has accordingly been allotted to Dr. W. E. Farndale, who kindly contributes the Introductory article to the Survey on the life and work of that great Methodist worthy.*

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### HUGH BOURNE—AND HIS VITAL MESSAGE

IN OUR centenary remembrance of the death of Hugh Bourne, founder of Primitive Methodism, we are not to be as those who merely lay a wreath upon a tomb, but rather as those who seek to hear one, who being dead, yet speaketh. We should aim at a close contact with the very spirit that animated him and lay ourselves open to the thrilling, moving infection of his indomitable will.

Several writers are joining in this symposium, and each will be unveiling various aspects of the personality of a great pioneer. The aim of this article will be to direct attention to the vital message and abiding service of Bourne.

We are, however, living in the latter half of the twentieth century. Hugh Bourne was born toward the end of the eighteenth century (3rd April 1772), and gained his vision and made his venture for the Kingdom of God in the former part of the nineteenth. It is therefore necessary, if we are rightly to estimate the magnitude of his work, to know what were the immense odds which he had to face in that age. No man or movement in the Christian Church could surely have had heavier handicaps, political, economic, ecclesiastical, and personal, than those which hampered him in his mission of spiritual revival.

From the political side, consider the international situation. Bourne would be four years old when the English colonies in America issued their Declaration of Independence. Before he was twenty, Louis the Sixteenth of France was beheaded, and the French Revolution was in full swing. The decisive period in Bourne's formative religious experience was that during which Napoleon Bonaparte became military dictator and then Emperor of France, scourge of Europe, and implacable enemy of England. Here is a sombre enough setting in all conscience for a revivalist. Think of it—prolonged world wars, England fighting for her very life, Nelson at sea, Wellington on land, battling for liberty—and amid it all, in an obscure part of the land, a recluse by upbringing and nature, is led of God to initiate a campaign for the release of thousands ensnared by Satan. The shock of contrast is staggering. But this is how Providence often works in its choice of leaders.

Look at the economic conditions at that time. Dr F. O. Darvall, writing on *Popular Disturbances and Public Order in Regency England*,<sup>1</sup> tells of the Luddite riots and their cause. The root trouble, he proves, was not anger at the introduction of new machinery, but maddening poverty which provoked men to wreak their fury on property. In 1812 the total earnings of an entire family—not just of an individual—might be only twelve shillings a week. Wages were often paid not in money but in kind, an employee being fobbed off with goods worthless to the recipient, instead

<sup>1</sup> Published by the Oxford University Press (1934).

of ready cash. The meagre pittance drawn weekly was subject to deductions at the whim and caprice of the masters. Prices of provisions rose steeply to an intolerable point. So widespread and menacing were the consequent risings in the Midlands and the North that a revolution was feared. Dr Darvall supplies figures to show that in order to suppress the disorder in some of the manufacturing districts, there had to be sent in the spring and winter of 1811-12 a military force greater than that with which Wellesley started on the Peninsular War. Amid such an environment Hugh Bourne was able to pit himself. His biographer relates that when he set out on a customary thirty- or forty-mile journey on foot, he would take with him two or three hard-boiled eggs and a little dry bread, and during the day would sit down by a well or stream to partake of his humble fare. Surrounded by poverty, he practised austerity without any self-pity.

No encouragement could he derive from the ecclesiastical horizon, if he glanced there at the signs of the times. Though born and bred as a Churchman, Bourne the evangelist was dubbed a Nonconformist. And think of what that meant! In 1807—the year that Bourne held his first camp-meeting on Mow Cop—Sydney Smith in the *Letters of Peter Plymley*, remarked: 'When a country squire hears of an ape, his first feeling is to give it nuts and apples: when he hears of a Dissenter his immediate impulse is to commit it to the county jail, to shave its head, to alter its customary food, and to have it privately whipped.'<sup>3</sup> Only seven years before those words were written, a Baptist minister from Diss in Norfolk travelled to a little country village on the border of Suffolk called Wetheringsett to hold a simple service in the house of one of his members. Suddenly a neighbouring clergyman who was a magistrate appeared and took him into custody under the provisions of the Conventicle Act. Then with other magistrates, he proceeded to exact £20 from the minister, Mr Farmery, £20 more from the poor man at whose house he preached, and five shillings each from eight of his hearers, chiefly very poor persons—in all forty guineas.<sup>4</sup> Dr W. E. Selbie, of Mansfield College, Oxford, summarized the position thus: 'The condition of Nonconformists at the beginning of the nineteenth century was such as it is very difficult to realize today. They were still under the ban of the law. They were unable to hold any public offices. The national universities were closed to them. They could not be married in their own churches, nor be buried save with the rites of the Church of England. If their worship was tolerated it was only in specially licensed conventicles. Add to these things that . . . Dissenters were everywhere denounced as revolutionaries and Jacobites, and that their growth and prosperity were viewed by the authorities with alarm and hatred.'<sup>4</sup> Test Act, Corporation Act, Conventicle Act—all were in force when Bourne began his career. Before Bourne could have 'the day's praying on Mow Cop' he had to procure from Lichfield a licence for the ground and from the Stafford Quarter Sessions a preacher's licence. A threat had been made to appeal to the law to crush him. Only under the Toleration Act could such licences be obtained, and the title of that Act in the statute book is 'An Act for exempting their Majesties' Protestant subjects dissenting from the Church of England from the penalties of certain laws'. Methodists who wished their meeting-houses to be legalized had perforce—much as it had irked John Wesley—to be registered as Dissenters. The

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by David Thomson in *England in the Nineteenth Century* (1950).

<sup>4</sup> C. T. Horne, *Nonconformity in the Nineteenth Century*.

<sup>4</sup> *Nonconformity: Its Origin and Progress*.



intolerance of squire, parson and magistrate made the task of Bourne, a layman, and of those who associated with him, often cruelly hard. But Bourne never flinched nor faltered, though, like the apostle Paul, he and his coadjutors were made the filth of the world and the offscouring of all things. That must be kept firmly in mind if we would rightly reckon the stubborn bravery of this knight errant.

In personal appearance Bourne was not prepossessing, and even his greatest admirer would never have classed him as eloquent. As of Paul, his critics might have said: 'His bodily presence is weak, and his speech is of no account.' But such as he was and all that he had, he handed over to God in absolutely uttermost surrender. Strength from above sustained his physical frame amid almost incredible privations. Though his utterance was rugged, yet the Spirit so energized within him that it could be freely affirmed that 'eyes unused to tears, strong men unaccustomed to the melting mood, wept freely under his preaching'.

Through this man, confronted with all such obstacles, there came a message for the Methodist Church which still tingles with passionate vehemence for our own day.<sup>5</sup>

This word of God, as he esteemed it, was granted to him after his conversion at the age of twenty-seven. Glorious regeneration had been conferred on him by learning of Salvation through the Self Manifestation of the Son of God (John 14:6). Then by gradual and growing revelation he learned what he believed was the finest agency of evangelism. This cannot easily be put into a formula, for it is complex and compound, though coalescing into a unity. Little by little it dawned upon him, almost in serial fashion, as he ran up against developing need.

Thus we find that for his own personal inner life he applied his spare hours to 'exercises of faith'—an arresting and illuminating phrase. Religion for him could not be static: it must be 'from faith to faith' and this demanded 'exercise unto godliness'.

But in reading Quaker literature and through talks with members of the Society of Friends he was impressed that 'they would exercise faith until they moved whole neighbourhoods by so doing'. That was a vicarious faith in powerful operation.

In such an exercise of faith he discovered there lay the secret of what he termed the Conversation Gift. Let a Christian yield himself expectantly and longingly to divine influence and then during converse with an unconverted person there would be granted the gift of the right word with redeeming effect. Through this method he won his first convert, his cousin, Daniel Shubotham.

Allied with this arose the recognition of prayer as a force—to be set in motion by faith. Bourne called converts together in a house for prayer and he records: 'Shortly all the people seemed to get into the exercise of powerful faith and with heart and voice to lay siege to heaven and to bring down rich and plenteous baptisms of the Holy Ghost.'

That prayer-power he learnt would only lead to the sanctification of those who were already believers but could be focused upon those who were as yet outside the fold. Certain miners who had fallen under conviction of sin were, says Bourne, 'prayed into liberty' in a week-evening gathering for prayer.

Thus to Bourne prayer was not only an act of worship. Undoubtedly it was that. But it was also a prime factor in evangelism. Between these two interpretations and

<sup>5</sup> For a fully documented biography, see J. T. Wilkinson, *Hugh Bourne* (The Epworth Press, 15s.).

operations there was no clash or incongruity. God, who had appointed prayer as a means of grace meant this to be used in both its activities.

Bourne was also moved to a new estimate of the connexion of the relation between prayer and preaching in connexion with soul-winning. He could no longer be content with the assertion—utterly true as it is—that prayer is a necessary preparation for effective preaching. He went far beyond that. He came to conceive that evangelism demanded a service in which prayer was just as distinctively employed as the most earnest preaching—and even more so—to bring down in that very hour convicting and saving power. In evangelistic services, prayer, he firmly believed was greater than preaching.

So step by step he felt he had been drawn to the realization of the mightiest weapon in Christian warfare: the believing exercise of the power of prayer.

Then how should he use it?

The answer seemed to him to be given in a coincidence of Providence. Bourne's 'praying labourers', proving the efficacy of united prayer for themselves and others, were chafing at the restriction of their exercises to an hour a week in a cottage. 'Then', said Daniel Shubotham, 'you shall have a day's praying on Mow Cop.' Now about the same time Bourne kept reading in the Methodist magazines stirring narratives of the extraordinary success attending American camp-meetings. What appealed to him in the description of this new type of missioning was that whilst there was preaching, and much of it, there was also prayer, and a good deal of that—and prayer looked upon as he had come to see it: a supernatural force released by faith, flowing through human channels in converting potency. A further recommendation to Bourne was that this method was shown to be specially adapted to out-of-door service.

So then to him it was crystal clear. He would have a camp-meeting on Mow Cop, a day's praying. This was held on Sunday, 31st May 1807, from six in the morning until eight-thirty in the evening, thousands flocking to the scene. Throughout the day, prayer was in constant exercise. Though testimony and preaching and song had their place in the improvised programme, yet prayer was always intermixed with these. In addition, there were permanent praying companies, and the last three hours of the day were entirely devoted to prayer. The result was that many were brought into the assurance of salvation. Christians also were quickened and revived. Here then on a large scale was a powerful vindication of all that Bourne had envisaged as the way of religious advance.\*

Within two months, however, the Methodist Conference pronounced against camp-meetings. Why? The resolution banning them does not set out the reasons for this action. Looking back, one can see now that it was a misfortune that Bourne chose a name that did not fit his object. But then, on the other hand, one cannot but regret the failure of the leaders of Conference to disengage their minds from the American scene and label. And one must mourn their inability to see what actually, in form and spirit, it was that Bourne had introduced on Mow Cop to the notice of Methodism.

For note the distinctions. In America those who assembled lived in tents: in England a tent or at the most two might be used for storage. In the States the meetings lasted for a week: on Mow Cop and elsewhere they were only for a day. In America, services went on until very late hours at night: in England they ceased

\* W. E. Farndale, *The Secret of Mow Cop* (The Epworth Press, 3s.).

at dusk. Fatal to right judgement was the non-observation of these divergencies.

There was also apparently inadequate information from America. It has been stated that some Methodists in the States had sent reports of immorality on the part of certain folk who had been at camp-meetings. But now in a recent volume on *Methodism* issued by the American Methodist Publishing House, it is testified that there were notable accessions to the Church from round about 1800 as a consequence of the camp-meeting movement. By 1811 American Methodists were holding four hundred of these camp-meetings, and in 1820 nearly a thousand. It is in the same book authoritatively declared by American Methodists that almost to the end of the nineteenth century camp-meetings 'remained the effective recruiting ground of the Church'. Such information should have been offset against any alleged danger.

One wonders whether the British Conference had been apprehensive lest in Hugh Bourne should be found another Alexander Kilham (whom in 1795 they had severed from membership). If so, they had a wrong estimate of the man, for his standpoint and aims were completely different. He was not seeking for constitutional change, but for fresh evangelism.

Bourne could not agree with the interdict. He continued with the type of service which had been so blessed of God on Mow Cop. In June 1808 his Class Leader informed him that he had been put out of society (not simply, as sometimes suggested, removed from the plan as a preacher). Bourne was deeply pained for he dearly loved what he termed 'the Old Body', but he stirred up no strife.

Time set its seal upon the new work that he had thus begun. By the time of his death in 1852 there were 560 travelling preachers pledged to Primitive Methodism, serving in 1,723 chapels, with 118,508 Sunday-school scholars, and 22,398 teachers. The membership then stood at 109,984. (With this may be compared the 72,000 members in Methodism at the death of John Wesley.)

Primitive Methodism, it must be confessed, was not always true to the vision of its founder. Bourne had himself to check the tendency which manifested itself even in his lifetime to pare down to a bare minimum the exercises of prayer. When that occurred, he denied to the services the name of true camp-meetings, and disciplined the offenders so as to ensure reversion to the original model.

When in 1872 the Primitive Methodist Church was celebrating the centenary of the *birth* of Hugh Bourne, a directive issued to each Circuit and society singled out for commendation and emulation the fact that 'the Venerable Hugh Bourne was in his religious and ministerial life pre-eminently distinguished by the spirit, power, and practice of prayer'.

Is it not in this practice of prayer—and especially in evangelism—that modern Methodism is now at the centenary of Bourne's *death* being recalled. At two successive Conferences, Bradford in 1950 and Sheffield in 1951, acute expression has been given to this conviction.

Suppose that we baldly put Bourne's message thus: Prayer converts. Many, of course, will counter with the assertion: Preaching converts. *Of course, it does. But is not Bourne right too?*

Bourne attempted no philosophy of his method. He knew that it yielded the results he wanted and for which he knew he had been called of God. To him that was enough. But the story of its tested and triumphant success is a challenge to us to examine its foundations in the teaching of Christ and the doings of the apostles,

and to explore Christian biography and history for tokens there too of confirmation. And they are there in plenty.

Certainly the Master bids His disciples not only to ask but to receive, take, accept. Whatever He has to grant, we may and should petition Him to bestow upon us, but our requests are fruitless unless at some stage we do positively take. Our reception is by an active faith, alert, alive, operative. The prayer of faith which saves a sick soul as well as a diseased body is not a mere intellectual or devout assent to the power or willingness of Christ to give. It is a movement of man's spirit to lay hold of, grasp, appropriate, utilize now, at a precise moment, whatever the heavenly Father proffers. Petition is barren, supplication is incomplete, unless it issues in the human hand, empty, uplifted, becoming filled with the boon designed by God and desired by the earnest believer.

In 1947 a good Methodist in Wales told me how, when he was a boy, the Revival came to his chapel one week-night.

'Then what?'

'Why, we had meetings for prayer every week-night.'

'For prayer? You mean for preaching?'

'No, I don't. I mean for prayer.'

'And were people converted at those prayer-meetings?'

'Certainly. They came for that purpose. You see, in prayer-meetings, like those we had month after month, you felt the very power of God. That was the place to be converted in.'

Then, after a long pause he said: 'How I wish those times would come again.'

The right observance of this centenary can bring them back.

W. E. FARNDALE

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## *Articles*

### THE BACKGROUND OF HUGH BOURNE'S ACHIEVEMENTS

**T**HE SOCIAL, political, and religious conditions of the first half of the nineteenth century show by contrast the importance of the Hugh Bourne achievements.

In social affairs the period was characterized by change and challenge. Already the Industrial Revolution, beginning about 1750, was rapidly transforming the face of the land. To meet the growing needs of expanding industries, coal mines in various regions increased their production. The clothing trade, hitherto confined to East Anglia and the South-West, had migrated to the West Riding of Yorkshire. Most of the textile manufactures—cotton, woollen, lace, silk, stocking—established themselves in the North and the Midlands. Because of the expansion of shipbuilding on the Clyde, Tyne, and Wear, and of port facilities on the Thames, Humber, Avon, and Mersey, large towns arose at the mouth of the rivers just like guardians of the many seas.

This was the machine age, the dry bones of trade and commerce putting on new flesh and vitality. Inventions altered the whole situation. Factories grew up like mushrooms. Workshops developed, steamships were built, railways inaugurated. The nation seemed to be overwhelmed by an economic blitz. Speed began to replace leisurely craftsmanship. In response to the needs of industry, population multiplied, rising in seventy years from six million souls to eighteen million. Houses had to be built, and many of them came into being anyhow, anywhere, without sanitation, and with little sunshine, fresh air, or daylight. Amid squalor, disease, and death, new towns grew up and old ones expanded.

And withal, labour problems emerged. The first effect of the machine age appeared to be detrimental to the living standard of the wage-earning classes. While the nation increased its wealth and most of the manufacturers their profits, the toiling masses got long hours, low wages, and unhealthy conditions.

Changes in agriculture produced a similar effect. When enclosures replaced the open fields, and private enterprise the collective cultivation, the labourer lost his hold on the land and became a pauperized wage-earner.

Poverty, sickness, distress, starvation, and suffering, aggravated by the drink evil, were among the legacies from the many changes.

The problems thus created, or perpetuated, presented a challenge to the skill, ingenuity, and adaptability of human nature, to the temper and equanimity of the spirit in man. Many of the common people had patience and courage, and by perseverance improved their position, some of them becoming employers of labour, and very successful. Others lost patience and grew bitter and reckless, ultimately taking sides with avengers and conspirators.

Hugh Bourne answered the challenge with patience, courage, endurance, determination. Being a farmer's son on a moorland farm, living in isolation for the first sixteen years of his life, he developed shyness, diffidence, and hesitancy, but was always studious, steady, and considerate. Early in manhood he grew into a skilled workman, a carpenter of no mean ability, a self-employed man, with every prospect



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of a prosperous career. Recognizing, however, that the fundamental need of human life was moral and not material, he experienced a spiritual change, joined the Wesleyans, and began to evangelize his friends and neighbours—Daniel Shubotham, a stalwart miner, was his first convert. Gaining assurance from initial success, he dedicated the rest of his life to the work of evangelism and became the founder of a great Church that transformed the lives of numerous people, among them many potters, pitmen, puddlers, and pugilists.

On the subject of Total Abstinence Hugh Bourne's achievement was outstanding. Being 'a Teetotlar before the Teetotlars began their society', he had for a time to plough a lonely furrow. Sentiment in the Connexion in the twenties was rather low—how low may be seen by the request to the Conference of 1827 that trustees of chapels should 'provide wine for the use of the preachers either before preaching to give them a little spirit for their work, or after preaching to revive their exhausted energies.'

Hugh Bourne resisted this request although a number of delegates had previously signed the requisition. Desiring to emphasize his hostility, he struck the table in front of him 'with such vehemence that pens, ink, and paper were sent flying into the air'. Church records show that one quarterly meeting authorized the society stewards to provide a little brandy for the preacher before the sermon and after the sermon. On occasion the beer barrel might be seen at the official meetings for the purpose of refreshment. As late as 1842 a local preacher at Sheerness was reprimanded and then taken off the plan by the quarterly meeting because he had 'acted injudiciously in enforcing the principle of Teetotalism'.

In 1831 Hugh Bourne persuaded the Conference to ventilate the question in the Connexional Magazine and to pass a law 'for the promotion of Temperance'. Successive Conferences supported the movement and Hugh Bourne always regarded the years 1831-8 as the 'Seven Temperance-law years'. He believed that the great increase of members which took place in that period was mainly due to the Connexional support of Total Abstinence.

His condemnation of the drink evil brought him into conflict with one of his best friends and nearly split the Connexion. In a number of unpublished booklets William Clowes acknowledged that Hugh Bourne had charged him with certain irregularities, one of them very serious—"That I have been in the habbit of swalling down liquers for some time, that I drank a bottle a time for I would have it." In a further entry Clowes confessed that the physician had ordered him to take a little brandy.

The Conference of 1833 considered the charges and Hugh Bourne, in a two hours' speech, launched a bitter attack on his old friend.

After superannuating in 1842 he devoted himself more vigorously to the cause of Total Abstinence, and mainly through his influence the Primitive Methodist Church became a passionate advocate of the movement.

In political affairs the Hugh Bourne era was characterized by *agitation against Aristocratic Autocracy*. Aristocratic autocracy had exercised undiminished sway for many years, having subdued both kings and people. In and out of Parliament, in town and in rural areas, it governed with the authority of a dictator. Its supremacy was protected by the laws and constitution property and privilege had created. Agitation against the right of autocracy to rule without common consent was initiated by John Wilkes in his fight for individual liberty (1763-70), and was later

augmented by the movement for Parliamentary Reform inaugurated by the Whigs but suspended during the Napoleonic Wars. Joining in the agitation, groups of working-class political reformers organized the London Corresponding Society in 1792, the Hampden Clubs, Spencian Societies, and Political Unions of 1812-23, and the Chartist movement of 1836-50.

Aristocratic authority frowned upon working-class political activities, resisted the demands of the agitators, punishing more than two thousand of them with fines or imprisonment.

Throughout the greater part of the nineteenth century the wage-earning masses were deemed unworthy and unfit to exercise the political franchise. They had neither voice nor vote in the government of the land. They had no representatives in the House of Commons, no one to present their point of view, or their grievances.

The first instalment of democracy came in 1867 when Disraeli, because he wanted to 'diddle the Whigs', gave the vote to householders in urban areas. There was no real democracy in the land. Even the Mother Church of Methodism would have nothing to do with democratic rule in centralized government. Jabez Bunting, sometimes described as 'the Pope of Methodism', confessed in 1828 that he hated democracy as much as he hated sin. When reformers inside Wesleyanism demanded democratic rights and privileges, they were unceremoniously expelled from the Connexion or boycotted sufficiently to make them feel uncomfortable. More than 100,000 members were lost to the Church in the crisis of 1849-53 because of unobedient and unrepentant autocracy in Wesleyanism.

Hugh Bourne's achievement against this background stands out as a courageous experiment. He instituted a system of religious democracy bigger and better than anything that went before, a system operated for the most part by ordinary folk, many of them uneducated and untutored in matters of government. In fact he had to instruct some of them in the principles of public speech and debate. Undaunted by the knowledge that democracy on the Continent had run wild, he undertook a great risk when he made it the basis of a religious constitution. To safeguard it against the danger of a spiritual autocracy, he established the famous 'two to one principle', two laymen to one minister in all the legislative courts of the Church.

The principle operated both smoothly and efficiently, never causing any complaint, friction, or dissension. It satisfied the democratic urge of the age and remained in operation for more than a century. To the regret of many loyal Methodists this form of self-government was surrendered at the union of 1932 for the hope of a more efficient democratic organization.

In regard to the religious background two facts stand out, *the increase of population, and the failure of the Established Church to provide for the spiritual needs of the new communities*. Supported by pomp, power, and prestige, inheriting and receiving annually huge sums of money, possessing numerous churches, schools, colleges, and cathedrals, and appointing thousands of learned men to be the ordained ministers and channels of Divine Grace, the Anglican Church did not win the good will or support of the common people. As a matter of fact the Church was unpopular, partly because of 'the sins of the clergy', and partly because of its alliance with aristocracy and autocracy. Although its reputation and influence were destined to be restored through the beneficial effects of the Evangelical and High Church movements, that happy day had not yet arrived.

While Wesleyan Methodism was still the greatest friend the working classes ever

had, by the middle of the century it had suffered a serious decline in membership. More serious still was the loss of influence on the working classes, who had little faith in a spiritual and paternal autocracy.

Against this background Hugh Bourne's achievement is all the more noteworthy. Recapturing John Wesley's concern for the poor and most needy, he expanded and improved the method of field-preaching, adopting the American system of 'the camp-meeting'. Through this innovation a larger number of people could exercise the right of leadership and exposition, thereby creating diversity and extending their influence. Primitive Methodism thrived on this method of propaganda, so much so that it remained in operation until the union of 1932. Hugh Bourne acted more wisely than he imagined when he resisted the Wesleyan Conference ban on camp-meetings and went forward with the organizing of the Norton Camp Meeting, which provided the real reason for his expulsion from the Wesleyan Church. A Methodist Conference might make mistakes. One person can be right and a hundred wrong. Minorities may sometimes be wiser than majorities. Established authority is not always synonymous with intelligence, common sense, and omniscience.

Personal evangelism, democracy in Church government, a crusade against intemperance, communal leadership in open-air evangelism, may be regarded as the main achievements of the one-time shy and bashful village carpenter. Without pomp, or pride, or prestige, and with little education or natural endowments, he by the Grace of God created a Church of which any man might be proud. The multiplicity and variety of his activities, the serious earnestness of all that he did, the persistent determination to do the Master's will, the humble obedience to the heavenly vision still provide a worthy example to the Methodist people of today. Some of the things that characterized his life and work might with benediction to the Church and profit to the individual soul, be copied occasionally, if not the whole of his plans then the spiritual passion permeating his manifold activities.

ROBERT F. WEARMOUTH

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## HUGH BOURNE AS MAN OF BOOKS

**H**UGH BOURNE, son of a moorland farmer and wheelwright, had small educational advantages. His godly mother, Ellen Steel, taught him to read as well as to fear God as she worked her spinning-wheel, and he practised the art as a boy chiefly on the Bible and Watts's hymns. But a thirst for learning had been awakened in him—he would have appreciated that book which, in a later generation, was to set the course of the boy Arthur S. Peake, *Learning Better than Houses or Lands*; and when his schooling was cut short sooner than he desired, he set himself to maintain the habit of study with mathematics, history, geography, and presently natural philosophy and astronomy. When later he went to work for an engineer uncle, he sought to instruct himself for this work in mechanics, hydrostatics, and optics.

From boyhood he gave serious thought to religion, and it was to books that he went when, as he grew to young manhood, the desire to know God quickened within him. We have no very particular record of his reading at that time, save what he himself wrote later in his account of his evangelical experience. He read 'puritan, episcopal, and other writers', and especially the works of the early Quakers

—we may presume Fox's *Journal*, probably Sewel's *History*, perhaps Besse's *Sufferings of the Quakers*, and Penington's writings; certainly, I think, Robert Barclay's works. It was a volume of Barclay that he took with him, together with a written account of his own conversion, to the conversion of Daniel Shubbotham.

The influence of those Quaker books on Bourne's mind was never entirely lost. But it was the reading of an 'omnibus' volume borrowed by his mother from a Methodist neighbour in 1799 which proved most momentous to him in the way of spiritual direction. This book, 'as thick as a Bible', was a binding together of a *Life of Fletcher of Madeley*, with biographical sketches of other Methodist preachers—T. Taylor and John Haime, Jane Cooper's *Letters*, Alleine's *Alarm*, Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted*, and certain of John Wesley's sermons, including one on the Trinity which made a deep impression on the young man. His quest for a firm ground of faith led him to read several volumes of Christian evidences. He refers to one 'by a lady', which he read, apparently, somewhat critically; he thought 'justification by faith should have been more prominently set forth'.

Joseph Bourne, Hugh's father, was a 'Church of England man', at least by opinion, with a contempt for Methodism, in favour of which, therefore, Hugh had no initial prejudice. The sermon in the 'omnibus' volume was his first acquaintance with Wesley. Soon after, he got hold of Fletcher's *Letters on the Spiritual Manifestation of the Son of God*, which supplied the direct means to his conversion. 'Christ', he wrote in after years, 'manifested Himself to me, and I was born again in an instant! yea, passed from death unto life.' Subsequently he read Wesley's *Sermons and Notes*, and Fletcher's *Checks to Antinomianism*. As Kendall, the Primitive Methodist historian, says, 'Methodism first reached him through the medium of books'—and such books as indeed made of him a *primitive* Methodist. Bourne later refers to the reading of Wesley's *Journal* and the lives of John Nelson and other Methodist preachers. 'As they were in the way of field-preaching and getting souls converted to God,' he comments, 'I had taken these as sound proceedings of Methodism.'

It says much for the mental vigour of this man of scant educational background that in his passion to know the sources of his faith at first hand he should set himself to acquire Hebrew and Greek. He appears to have done something also at Latin and French. The Rev. John Grant, a Methodist preacher, provided him with lexicons and helped him with the biblical languages. In 1808 he records: 'I have been now for some time very much engaged in the Greek. This week I have read much in the Greek Testament. I have been much assisted in the languages through prayer. I believe the Lord requires at my hands to learn the Greek and Hebrew.' In some of his writings for the *Primitive Methodist Magazine*, quotations from the Greek are printed. His sense of responsibility as the new Connexion came into being led him to the study of the British Constitution and the principles of jurisprudence.

Other references to Bourne's reading occur here and there. In April 1813 he read 'the first volume on Mr Wesley, by Benson', owning himself 'in an uncommon manner instructed, edified, and strengthened by this book'. 'I trust', he continues, 'I shall have cause to thank God to all eternity for the reading in this book today.' In May 1810 he had been reading 'part of Cyrus's history in Rollin', and had been struck with his 'lessons on temperance'. Perhaps thereby was implanted some of the seed which in after years bore fruit in Bourne's convinced and fervent tem-

perance advocacy. In 1819 he records the reading of Thomas Coke's *Life*, and it may well be that this contributed to the interest in overseas missions which is attested by regular articles on missionary enterprise in various parts of the world to which he gave place in the *Magazine* he started in that year. He studied a number of commentaries on the Bible. In 1846 he was engaged with 'Watson's *Commentary*', which he voted 'superior to Adam Clarke'. In 1851 he made a present from his library of ten volumes of Dr Lardner's *Works* to Walford, afterwards his biographer. Thomas Russell interestingly records a conversation with Bourne concerning Cobbett's works. 'I like Cobbett's language,' said Bourne, 'and so read his works because of the plainness of the style, but not for his political doctrines.'

Bourne's 'Advice to Preachers on Books', published in the *Magazine* for 1824, indicates something of his own range in reading. The recommended list includes Benson's or Scott's commentaries, Wesley's *Notes on the New Testament*, Brown's *Concordance*; on preaching, Baxter's *Reformed Pastor*, Blackwall on Preaching, Cotton Mather, Fletcher's *Portrait of St Paul*; 'for real divinity', Wesley's and Fletcher's works; 'for laborious preaching', the lives of Luther, Bernard Gilpin, Bishop Bedell, James Arminius, John Wesley, John Fletcher, and William Bramwell.

The work of Bourne as editor, seen in the setting of his time and circumstance, is not unremarkable. He had been a reader of the *Arminian Magazine*, and no doubt from this had been impressed with the value of such a periodical to the life of the Church. He records in his diary for Friday, 23rd January 1818, 'I planned a small magazine,' and in the following year he determined to make the venture, forestalling objections from among his following by undertaking that if the publication made a profit this should stand to the benefit of the Connexion, while if any loss was incurred, this should be borne by his own pocket. The first number appeared in June, intended as a quarterly at the price of twopence. Its title-page reads: A Methodist Magazine / for the Year 1819 / Conducted by the Camp Meeting Methodists / known by the name of / Ranters / called also / Primitive Methodists / Leicester, Printed by J. Fowler, High Cross. A preface announces its aim to 'assist in disseminating knowledge, and in circulating information and intelligence', and also promising that 'the subjects will be various and diversified'. Among other features, 'Poetry will open, entertain, and engage the mind, while it assists in cultivating the heart and in promoting piety and virtue'.

This first issue contains a reprint of the middle section of Wesley's 'Discourse II' on the Sermon on the Mount, and other features include an example of 'a method of family Bible-study'—a sort of catechetical method—the subject being Psalm 1; an expository comment on 'locusts and wild honey'; a rhapsodic essay 'Of the Rainbow'; some extracts from reports of C.M.S. work, and an American letter. The poetry consists of Addison's lines, 'How are Thy servants blest, O Lord', and a paraphrase of part of Matthew 6 by James Thompson. This first magazine venture, of course, was not a success, but Bourne footed the bill without demur and determined to try again. In the following year he persuaded the Conference to authorize a magazine—to be a threepenny monthly—and was officially appointed editor, an appointment he was to hold for more than twenty years.

Bourne sought to make his magazine a vehicle of instruction and help both for the Primitive Methodist preachers and generally to assist the organization and policy of the Connexion. We find him on different occasions printing extracts from



such works as Harmer's *Observations*, Prof. Osterwald's *Exercises* ('On the Piety requisite for the Ministerial Office'), St Bernard, *On the Love of God*, and Jeremy Taylor's works. But he contributed copiously to the magazine himself in various ways. He had issued a number of pamphlets before the days of his editorship—such as *Observations on Camp Meetings* (1807), *A Scripture Catechism* (1807), *Remarks on the Ministry of Women* (1808)—in which he cites scripture authority in favour, getting past St Paul with the contention that his prohibition concerned Church discipline, not preaching. Later on he wrote others, e.g. *Advice to Young Women*, *Rules for Holy Living*, and *A Treatise on Baptism*. The magazine gave him a medium for the dissemination of such treatises and regulations. Thus, in the number for June 1820 he has a 'Treatise on Discipline: chiefly as it respects Meetings for Business', and in 1823, 'Advice to Travelling Preachers'. One of his most interesting contributions (1825) is headed, it might be prophetically, 'Biblical Criticism'. This is really an ingenious interpretation of the account of Pentecost in Acts 2 as a justification of Camp-Meetings.

In 1821 he began a serial 'History of the Origin of the Primitive Methodists'; while an 'Ecclesiastical History', which began with the Book of Genesis, ran for practically the whole period of his editorship, the final instalment appearing in 1842 in the last number for which he was responsible. This was published in volume form in 1865. Walford is at pains to apologize for the magazine's lack of brilliance, and there is no doubt that as time went on the Connexion (and particularly the ministers) got rather tired of the old man's contributory editorship; probably a number of them thought they could do the job better. Brilliance was no concern of Bourne's. He was concerned for the spiritual health of the Connexion which he had seen so wonderfully brought into being, and he deliberately cultivated a plain style, such as might be understood without ambiguity by all. The remark quoted about Cobbett is revealing. This magazine was not his only enterprise of the kind; he started also a *Children's Magazine*, and a *Preachers' Magazine* (1827)—to which he contributed a 'Treatise on English Grammar' and one 'On the Origin of Language'. As late as 1849, three years after his return from the American tour, he was meditating another periodical, to be called *The Primitive Methodist Revivalist*—no doubt missing his former organ of expression. Two years previously he was occupying himself with a commentary on St John's Gospel.

A word should be added about his two hymn-books. The first collection, 'For Camp-Meetings, Revivals, etc.', contained much that would be called doggerel, but many of the numbers became both popular and effective in the early movement. I remember my mother, who could recall some of the pioneer preachers, singing 'Christ He sits on Zion's Hill', 'My soul's full of glory', 'Stop, poor sinner', 'The gospel news is sounding', 'Come and taste along with me', and others. The *Large Hymn Book* (536 hymns), produced later, with a preface which included a directive section 'On Worship', is somewhat soberer, containing hymns by Wesley, Watts, Doddridge, Newton, and Cowper, as well as a good number of original hymns by Hugh Bourne and William Sanders—who also allowed themselves the freedom of altering some of Charles Wesley's! Bourne evidently had a feeling for poetry and some acquaintance with poets in current vogue. In 1808 when he listened to Crawford's preaching, a line from Parnell's *The Hermit* came into his mind. He contributed verse of his own to the magazine, some of it not without merit; but it must be confessed that the afflatus of the poet was not among his greater endowments.

PHIL. J. FISHER

# HUGH BOURNE AND THE FUNCTION OF THE LAITY IN THE CHURCH

## I. PERSONAL

IT IS significant that Hugh Bourne was a carpenter and so a craftsman, like another more famous Founder of a Church. The sense of craftsmanship never forsook him, and is seen in the pride he took in his constructions and compositions. In an age of rapid manufacture, he retained something of the artist's love of his products, in this case the organization of a new society. Perhaps also the rise and development of a new skill in his neighbourhood, that of artistic pottery, called by the name of Wedgwood, had an influence upon his sense of good workmanship. In addition, he was a moorlander and a nature-lover, having much of Wordsworth's Wanderer in his make-up, though without the gift of verse. For he was prosaic and logical rather than poetical, democratic in his tendencies though sometimes autocratic in his actions, and through local circumstances disposed to be Quakerish, puritanical, and evangelical. Though the chief founder of a new religious society, he was never ordained, nor was he President of the new organization, though he was for most of his lifetime its effective Secretary. He thus remained technically a layman—like St Paul and Jesus Christ Himself; never adopted full clerical dress, though in later life addressed as 'Reverend', and even as 'Venerable'; and yet the promoter of new bodies called indifferently congregations, classes, causes, societies, communities, and then a Connexion. He maintained that he was no dissident nor disrupter, but an original Methodist who adopted fresh methods required by circumstances, and who believed in conversation-preaching and house-preaching and the ministry of women. The only notable exception to his tolerance of mind occurred when he believed himself to be warned by a voice to flee from the cathedral and city of Lichfield because of its sinful idolatry.

## II. HISTORICAL SETTING

The five towns of the Potteries were in the full flood of the Industrial Revolution as described by Tawney in his *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, and of which John Morley said that it was the most awful influx the world ever saw of furious provocatives to unbridled sensuality and riotous animalism, for the erection of a barrier to which civilization will always owe something to the name of the Evangelicals. Hugh Bourne was shocked by the ignorance, vice and brutality about him, and like John Wesley might have exclaimed, 'Church or no church, the people must be saved,' even by unusual methods. His adoption of camp-meetings was a counter-move to the 'wakes' which were commonly the occasion of drunken orgies and gross immorality. The camp-meetings were in the eyes of the Methodist authorities irregular, but, as the Rev. Robert Hall remarked, the activities of Christ Himself, of the Apostles, of Luther and Calvin, and of Wesley and Whitefield, were also very irregular. Hugh Bourne was in good company, if not in the apostolic succession.

His immediate insistence was upon individual conversion and the consequent reformation of the neighbourhood. For these purposes lay evangelization was invoked irrespective of ecclesiastical orders and authority, though Bourne was always emphatic that everything should be done decently and in order. Although brought up in the Anglican Church, there is little evidence of his being influenced

by its teaching or methods; rather he preferred the ways of 'primitive' Methodism, though he was not responsible for the adoption of the title. And whilst himself not married, he solved the question of the status of women in the Church as being in principle one of equality with men. 'Dinah Morris,' the heroine of *Adam Bede*, was his intimate friend, and was typical of the women preachers of his movement. Himself no cleric, he took over the function of general superintendent of the incipient Church, and in that sense was an overseer or Bishop. It is remarkable that his conversion, after twenty years of spiritual anguish, was not accountable to any person or institution, but was entirely attributed to the reading of books. He was one of the few cases on record of spiritual transformation through the medium of study alone, however much circumstances may have provided food for meditation. 'If ever there was a conversion brought about through the instrumentality of books it was in the case of Hugh Bourne' (Kendall).

### III. LITERARY TENDENCIES

It followed that a large part of his ministry was educational. He had great love of children, and was never happier than when teaching them. In his earlier days he acted as a Sunday-school teacher, combining both 'secular' and 'sacred' instruction in one process, as was the unavoidable custom in his days. For himself, he had large aspirations toward almost encyclopedic culture, only partially realized for reasons of health. But his desires bore fruit later in the establishment of a ministerial training institute at Sunderland, of Bourne College at Birmingham, and of Hartley College at Manchester. These developments, unforeseen by him, were yet in accordance with his aims and policy. His own educational activities were mostly concentrated upon editorial work at Bemersley, near Stoke, where he was manager of the Connexional book-room for twenty years. Here were issued magazines, reports, and articles, and here must have been composed much of his fragmentary books: a history of the Connexion, a commentary on St John, and a strange Journal. (It is curious that the new North Stafford University College should be constructing a course of studies having the same breadth of view as Bourne's programme for himself.) Evidently he took up with relish the function of educator to his infant community, a work eminently that of a layman expressing the voice of the plain man in revolt against the vice and irreligion of nineteenth-century industrialism.

### IV. ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY

His Church policy conformed to these social aims. He adopted the functional or pragmatic method rather than the legal. His procedure was 'irregular', as we have seen, but it is to be judged by its fruits. The key-word, as with Wesley, is to be found in the word Society. Here they both anticipated modern sociology, which finds a Church to be one type of social formation, religiously inspired. But being tolerant, he held firmly to the Protestant doctrine of the right of private judgement. He was no clerical sacramentarian, but admitted the practice of lay administration, still often followed in Methodism. He accepted no sharp division into sacred and secular callings, but excluded party politics from Church discussions. His peremptory exclusion of a 'speeching radical' from a chapel (possessed by himself) illustrates that fact. Yet the chapels were governed by committees freely elected by members, and the adoption of the principle of two laymen to one ministerial representative to the Annual Conference made a predominantly lay Connexion; thus

the Constitution was not hierarchical, but elective and representative. Here was no single authority, but Conference had the last word. Whilst Hugh Bourne became General Superintendent, appointments to office were made indirectly by a general committee, and Bourne was himself superannuated by Conference. Thus the priesthood of believers was maintained, the idea of variety in unity observed, and the new polity made implicitly communal.

This democratic constitution is exhibited in the spirit of the General Rules adopted in 1814, which were from the people, for the people, and by the people, and of which Hugh Bourne said: 'It is probable there never was an instance of rules being made in the way these were. They were considered as the work of the whole Connexion: there being scarce a member but gave his opinion on them before they were completed, and it is not very often that the making of rules is accompanied with so much prayer and supplication to Almighty God.' The first draft of Rules asserts: 'It is therefore the business and duty of every member in every station to have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, without respect of persons. Putting away all bigotry and narrow-mindedness; not lightly esteeming others on account of difference of opinion; for "it is certain that opinion is not religion, not even right opinion." And God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him; and the Highest is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Therefore walk in wisdom toward them that are without, and honour all men, highly esteeming pious people of all denominations; and endeavour to make this Society a blessing unto all people. "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother."'

#### V. PHILOSOPHICAL TEMPERAMENT

Hugh Bourne was credited by some of his friends with being philosophical. Both his taciturnity and his habit of soliloquizing were ascribed to his philosophy. Of any technical knowledge of philosophy there is no evidence, but his conversion by study and his communion with nature, together with his bachelor life, bespeak a meditative disposition; and his incessant walking-tours entitle him to belong to the peripatetic school! He had considerable acquaintance with applied natural science, and a keen eye for landscape, but no evident interest in fine art. His attitude to mysticism was friendly but cautious, and altogether he revealed the rational temperament of the lover of wisdom which is called philosophical. He was early a dedicated soul and his long life ensured the years that bring the philosophic mind. It is significant that Primitive Methodism has a tradition of philosophical studies, from the days of the founding of the Sunderland Institute to the later period of the establishment of a Chair of Philosophy at Hartley College. That this tradition was in the spirit of Hugh Bourne there can be no doubt, for his sagacity, his critical ability along with extensive knowledge, and his practical idealism entitle him to a place amongst the sages. It is significant that two chairs at Hartley College in subjects to which he was especially inclined, Biblical Criticism and Philosophy, were later filled by laymen, though at present out of service.

ATKINSON LEE

## HUGH BOURNE—THE REBEL

**B**UT WAS Hugh Bourne a rebel? Certainly not in the original sense of the word, which is derived from the Latin word for war. Rebellion is armed opposition to a government. But words have the trick of expanding their meanings. My dictionary gives as a secondary meaning of rebellion, 'disobedience to authority'. In that sense Bourne was a rebel. In any case why be afraid of the term, or regard its application to a person as disparaging? Some of the noblest figures of history were rebels.

In a community two entities confront each other—the Government and the individual. Perhaps the fundamental political problem is to find the right adjustment between the two. While even a bad Government, as an alternative to anarchy, extends personal freedom in some measure, the best Government limits personal freedom in some respects. The individual owes a general obedience to his Government, even when he disagrees with it. But there is in each individual a hard core, not so much of natural right as of sacred responsibility, that defies authority. Thus, while a man must as a general rule defer his own judgement to the decisions of authority, he may reach a point beyond which he feels he cannot go in that direction without being false to himself—and then he becomes a rebel.

Autocracy fosters rebellion. By forbidding any challenge to itself it drives dissentient opinion underground, or forces it into passive or active opposition. In a democracy where free discussion and criticism of authority are allowed, and a change of Government may be worked for, a vent is provided for contrary opinion and feeling, and there is less excuse for disobedience. But it may happen. In our own country, during the last half-century, we have seen Suffragettes adopting militant tactics, Nonconformists refusing to pay the Education Rate, Army officers in Ulster threatening armed resistance to Home Rule for Ireland, Conscripts refusing to do any kind of military service. If such action is honestly based on conscience the resister is in an impregnable position; but conscience can so easily be made a stalking-horse for prejudice or vested interest. When its voice is unmistakable the individual is compelled to say with Luther: 'Here stand I, I can no other, so help me God.'

These reflections, drawn from the political world, may seem out of place in regard to Hugh Bourne, whose disobedience was to an ecclesiastical authority. But the principles operating in the two spheres are essentially the same, though modified by the differences between the two. The Church, unlike the State, is a voluntary organization, and the extremest penalty it can inflict on a rebel is to expel or excommunicate him.

Hugh Bourne was not a rebel by nature. He was not of that class, too common in some churches, who are always 'agin the Government'. A shy man, but a man of individuality and courage, he could not be moved from a course which he felt to be right. The Methodist Church, when Bourne joined it, had amassed property and created institutions of various kinds, the evangelistic passion that gave it birth was beginning to cool down, aggression was giving way to consolidation. But in Hugh Bourne's heart the early fires still burned. At first he gave himself, in a quiet way and with considerable success, to the task of evangelizing the mining village of Harsiseahead. Learning through the religious press, and especially through Lorenzo Dow, the eccentric and passionately zealous American evangelist, of the



new Camp-meeting method which was proving so effective in the States, Bourne was deeply impressed and planned to hold a Camp Meeting at Norton in August 1807 to counteract the evils of the wake week. But before that date was reached two events bearing strongly on that decision had taken place. A full day of prayer and preaching had been held on Mow Cop on 31st May, which had brought together thousands of people and resulted in the winning of many converts; and the Methodist Conference, meeting at Liverpool, had expressed strong disapproval of Camp Meetings as being unsuited to English life and liable to peculiar abuses.

That official pronouncement provoked much heart-searching among the little band of unorthodox evangelists, and caused some of them to withdraw from support of the Norton Camp Meeting. Bourne, however, firm in his conviction that God had inspired this venture, decided to go forward. Like the Apostles before the Sanhedrin, he felt that he must obey God rather than man, even if in this case man meant the Methodist Conference.

Other Camp Meetings followed. During the next year Bourne's Class Ticket was withheld and his name dropped from the roll. The reason given was that he had not attended his Class Meeting, though it was well known that his neglect of this means of grace was due not to slackness but to the demands of his evangelistic work. The real reason of such drastic action by the Circuit authorities was that he had defied the authority of the Conference. Bourne accepted his dismissal quietly, making no protest, continuing his evangelistic labours, and urging his converts to join a Methodist church.

That was Hugh Bourne's act of rebellion, and no breath of censure on him comes from any quarter today. It is recognized that a Christian must obey the voice of his own conscience against any authority, and the spiritual results that followed prove, as Gamaliel urged, that the work was of God. What of the decisions and actions of the Church Courts? They are less easy to assess. The problem of the authority is more complicated and difficult than that of the rebel. His way may be hard to travel, but it is usually not hard to find. In time of war the Government's treatment of the Conscientious Objector is more difficult to determine than is the action of the Conscientious Objector himself. There was much to be said for the Methodist Conference's disapproval of Camp Meetings as conducted in America. Perhaps these over-cautious leaders did not see that the method was capable of adjustment to English conditions, and their hostile expression was too wholesale and extreme. No doubt the Circuit authorities acted in good faith in excluding from membership Bourne and others who stood with him; rebellion, in its mildest forms, must be dealt with. One cannot, however, avoid the feeling that their action showed a certain narrowness of outlook and sympathy, and that the situation might have been handled with greater wisdom and Christian charity. It provides another instance of human errors being overruled for good by a Higher Power.

Rebellion was followed by schism—schism in which the cutting was done by the parent body. The birth of Primitive Methodism, in essentials though not in details, is parallel to the birth of Wesleyan Methodism. Wesley did not plan to create another Church; he was driven to it by circumstances, the chief of which was the opposition of the Church of England to his evangelistic activities. The crisis which precipitated Primitive Methodism came in this way. In 1810 the Circuit authorities refused to receive a class which had been formed by the labours of Bourne and his colleagues. What were they to do? Obviously the spiritual needs of these converts

must be met. Other classes were formed. The cutting took root; nourished by the sunshine and rain of heavenly grace it grew and became a great tree and bore rich fruit.

Schism is regarded by high-churchmen as a deadly sin and by many Christians as a disaster. Dante puts schismatics deep down in his *Inferno*. Factiousness, failure to 'keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace', is evil. But is there either theological or historical justification for regarding schism as either a sin or a disaster?

Except for the geographical break into East and West, the Roman Church, partly by the use of the sword, maintained its unity for 1,500 years. Many rebels like Savonarola, and many heretical movements such as that of the Albigenses, were crushed by the power of Rome. Then came Luther's great act of rebellion, the result of which was not a simple cleavage but rather the breaking-off of chunks from Rome to form national churches, and later the breaking-off of chunks from the churches thus created to form new sects.

The trend toward division has been checked, and the movement is now toward reunion. That is good, but it does not mean either that we should deplore the divisions of the past, most of which have widened the appeal, and added to the strength, of Christianity; or that we should force the pace to reunion. Methodist Reunion has been achieved in this country and, though the early results are not encouraging, it will probably justify itself in time. But many Primitive Methodists still feel that a certain valuable ethos that marked their church as a separate body has been largely lost in fusion. For some years representatives of the Church of England and of the Free Churches have been meeting to seek a way to reunion. The better understanding, the increase of friendliness, between the Establishment and Nonconformity is a matter of rejoicing; but there is cause for apprehension in the light-hearted acceptance of Episcopacy by some Free Church leaders. If it were merely episcopacy as one mode of Church government among many that we were asked to adopt we might swallow our convictions or our prejudices; but how can Freechurchmen agree to the doctrine that the Historic Episcopate is necessary to a true Church? Corporate unity is desirable, but not at the price of the surrender of fundamental principles.

Primitive Methodism was the child of schism. But in the critical early decades of the nineteenth century it helped to save Britain from anarchy and revolution, and brought into the religious life of the nation a unique indefinable something of great spiritual value. In our longing for a big united Church let us make sure that we do not lose more than we gain by destroying the peculiar genius of small sects. Unity is of the spirit, and corporate unity is valuable only as an expression of spiritual unity. When Jesus prayed for his disciples 'that they all may be one', I am sure that the picture in His mind was not a Church ruled by an infallible Pope, or even by a representative Methodist Conference. Christ is leading us back to unity, but progress must be slow; while we cherish the spirit of unity let us be grateful for the immense spiritual treasure that has been won or preserved by our divisions, and make sure that we do not carelessly sacrifice it.

E. B. STORR

## THE CULTIVATION OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE IN EARLY PRIMITIVE METHODISM

**C.** SYLVESTER HORNE has pointed out<sup>1</sup> that one of the most striking facts about early Primitive Methodism is that the amazing results achieved cannot be connected with the labours of 'any commanding personality such as Wesley or Whitefield'. One may easily underestimate the qualities of a Hugh Bourne or William Clowes, but to few religious movements can the words of St Paul be so fittingly applied: 'Why, look at your ranks, my brothers; not many wise men (that is, judged by human standards), not many leading men, not many of good birth have been called' (1 Corinthians 12, Moffatt). But for the grace of God these men would have remained unknown, except in their immediate neighbourhood; and the success they achieved was entirely through the spiritual power of which they became the channels. Yet it was no mere transitory tidal wave which brought them to prominence and then subsided. Successive decades bore witness to the permanence of the work and the abiding power. The question naturally arises: 'How was this same spiritual fervour maintained?'

We commence our investigation toward the end of that early period; for in the *Conference Minutes* of 1832 (p. 4) we have a reference to 'the means of Grace'—a phrase which is amplified by the words 'preachings, prayer-meetings, class-meetings, love-feasts, camp-meetings, and various means'. The order is significant but it must not be taken as an estimate of the relative importance of each.

It was, perhaps, natural that preaching should be placed first, since most of the members of the Conference gloried in the name of preachers. Although the full-time preachers were in the minority there were many ways in which all Christians could constantly proclaim the Word, especially that described as 'conversation preaching', which consisted in the personal approach to individuals at work, at home, or in any place where opportunity offered. It was this form which was strongly recommended and practiced by Hugh Bourne, and was suggested from his own early religious experience.<sup>2</sup>

But Dr W. E. Farndale<sup>3</sup> has rightly stressed the supremacy of prayer in the lives of these pioneers. Their outstanding characteristic was that they were men and women of prayer. William Clowes was converted at a prayer-meeting, and the great experience on Mow Cop, from which Primitive Methodism dated its origin, was regarded as the fulfilment of the prophetic words of Daniel Shubotham: 'You shall have a meeting upon Mow some Sunday and have a whole day's praying, and then you'll be satisfied.' From the days when a weekly prayer-meeting was set up at the house of old Jane Hall at Harriseahead Hugh Bourne and his fellow workers found the value of prayer. The story of the early days abounds with illustrations. One notable instance may be recalled. It is the never-to-be-forgotten story of Thomas Russell and John Ride, two of the early preachers, kneeling in the snow at Ashdown on the Berkshire Downs, one day in February 1830, as for hours they pleaded with God that Berkshire might be won for His Kingdom. Then with faith they went on their journey, saying in the words of John Ride: 'Yonder country's ours.'

<sup>1</sup> *A Popular History of the Free Churches* (1903), p. 288.

<sup>2</sup> John Petly, *The History of the Primitive Methodist Connexion* (1864), pp. 4, 11.

<sup>3</sup> *The Secret of Mow Cop* (1950), pp. 17ff.

Primitive Methodism inherited from the parent body a recognition of the value of the class-meeting and love-feast. Both Hugh Bourne and William Clowes became class-leaders early in their religious lives. When Clowes was 'unchurched' in 1810 the two classes at Kids Grove and Tunstall, which he had led, refused to separate themselves from him;<sup>4</sup> and it was the need of shepherding the rejected class of ten members at Standley which compelled Hugh and James Bourne 'to take upon them the care of a religious Connexion'.<sup>5</sup> Of the value of the love-feast we have innumerable illustrations from the very beginnings of the new movement.

Camp-meetings had played a great part in the birth of Primitive Methodism, and it is not surprising that such experiences were continually being sought. Moreover, as in the case of the father of Methodism, John Wesley, the open air was often the only place where the pioneer preachers could bear their witness and pray.

The most interesting part of the 1832 *Minutes* is that which refers to 'various other means' of grace. In seeking a definition of these it must not be forgotten that the author of the sentence was, in all probability, Hugh Bourne, since he had been ordered, by the Bradford Conference of that year, to 're-consolidate the *Minutes*'.

Much stress was laid by the early Primitives on the need of a disciplined life. At the very beginning of his religious work William Clowes had drawn up for himself a scheme of discipline<sup>6</sup> and the rules applied to the early preachers were strict. Only those who could discipline their own lives were able to appeal in the name of a Master who offered to each would-be disciple a cross.

In recalling the value placed on the study of good literature we are reminded of John Wesley's own example and the books he wrote for the benefit of the first Methodists. Hugh Bourne followed in his footsteps, and, although his equipment at first was slender, sought to cultivate his mind that he might assist others. It must not be forgotten that it was the reading of Fletcher's letters 'On the Spiritual Manifestation of the Son of God' which led Bourne into the Light. Many attempts were made to supply to the members suitable literature. Various hymn-books were published for worship. As early as 1818 Hugh Bourne was the leader in an effort to establish a quarterly magazine, and he met the deficit on the venture out of his own pocket. His many publications are a proof of his industry and consecration. A Connexional Book-room was established in 1821.

The strangest omission from the 'means of grace'—especially in view of the claim to return to the primitive Methodism of Wesley—is that of any reference to the sacraments. There are many reports of love-feasts in the early Primitive Methodist magazines but a curious silence regarding the Lord's Supper. We know that Hugh Bourne was much impressed by the Quaker witness in his early years, but the comparative rarity of observance of the Lord's Supper must not be attributed to this. There was no real anti-sacramentalism. One may even regard the popularity of the love-feast as a recognition of the value of symbolism in worship, and as a sacramental experience where men found Christ in the breaking of bread. The simple-minded folk who were found in many of these meetings were not versed in the doctrines of the Church. William Clowes admits that, at

<sup>4</sup> J. T. Wilkinson, *William Clowes* (1951), p. 28. I am much indebted to Mr Wilkinson for his help in verifying the facts of this essay.

<sup>5</sup> Preface to the *Minutes* of 1832. H. B. Kendall; *The Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church*, I.116.

<sup>6</sup> J. T. Wilkinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 19f.

the first love-feast he attended, he 'received the bread and water under the idea of receiving the sacrament', and he felt greatly disturbed lest any sin committed after this should place him among those who had partaken unworthily, and so he should incur the penalty spoken of in the Prayer Book. It is interesting to note that while there is no reference to the sacrament in the home work, the *Primitive Methodist Magazine* for July 1818 contains a letter from America, giving an account of a revival in that land, in which there are many references to the Lord's Supper.

In considering the attitude of the Primitive Methodists to Holy Communion we must consider also the conditions in the Methodist Church immediately before Hugh Bourne began his work. Whatever the desire of John Wesley the separation of Methodism from the Church of England seemed to be inevitable. One crucial question was whether the societies should receive the Lord's Supper from their own ministers or should go to the Anglican Church. It was in 1798 that Coke made his abortive proposal to the Bishop of London, that a number of Methodist ministers should be ordained so that they could administer the sacrament. He told the Bishop that 'a very considerable part of our Society have imbibed a deep prejudice against receiving the Lord's Supper from the hands of immoral clergymen'. The unfortunate attitude of the Methodist ministers themselves toward the evangelization efforts of the early Primitive Methodist pioneers left a legacy of distrust of ministerial prerogative that was unlikely to help the claims of a rite which had been kept entirely under ministerial administration. These newly converted Primitives found in the democratic class-meeting and love-feast a spiritual home that nurtured their souls.

But this does not mean that the sacraments were ignored. Indeed one may say in regard to the older of the two sacraments that it assumed an importance which only the discussions of recent years can match. Hugh Bourne had rejected the efforts of Dr Paul Johnson to win him over to the Quaker position, and it is interesting to note that it was he who was foremost in providing early literature on the subject of Baptism. In 1823 he wrote a series of articles for the *Primitive Methodist Magazine*, which were published in booklet form, in the same year, under the title: 'A Treatise on Baptism, in Twelve Conversations.' Bound with it were 'five original hymns' on the same subject—also the composition of Bourne. James Bourne published from the Bemersley Book-room in 1835 a tract, written by an ex-Baptist minister, under the title: *An apology for Renouncing Adult Baptism, by Immersion, and Embracing Pedo-Baptism, in a Letter to the Second Church and Congregation of Coseley*. We note that among the early publications of the Book-room was a treatise on Baptism, sold in two parts—Part I at 5d, and Part II at 2d.\*

Lest it should be thought that Hugh Bourne was ploughing a lonely furrow a notice from the *Minutes* of 1828 may be quoted: 'As there have been applications for the Treatise on the mode of Baptism, it may be necessary to say that the first edition was all sold off in the course of a few weeks, so that it has been found difficult to obtain a single copy. But a second edition is preparing, and is expected to be ready to come out with the September magazines.' In many *Conference*

\* A. W. Harrison, *The Separation of Methodism from the Church of England* (1945), p. 59.

\* Unfortunately no trace of Part I can be found. Part II can be seen in the *Primitive Methodist Magazine* for 1829, pp. 403ff. The previous tract by Bourne is listed also in the same catalogue at 3d. This proves it is different from the missing Part I.



*Minutes* there are references to Baptism, especially the provision of Baptismal Registers,\* and in 1835 we have the significant passage:

*Qu.* 6. What must be done to assist in regard of Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Funerals?

*A.* That a treatise with suitable forms and explanations be published; and in order to this, that the circuits be kindly applied to, and requested to send in their thoughts on the same.

It was in 1835 that a Conference regulation affirmed: 'If any travelling preacher be baptized by immersion, so called, he ceases to be a travelling preacher in the Primitive Methodist Connexion.'

We have noted already the lack of information about the actual celebrations of the Lord's Supper, yet the existence of the practice is attested by a reference as early as 10th August 1819, in the minutes of the Nottingham Preparatory Meeting.

*Qu.* 34. To whom shall the sacrament be administered?

*A.* To all our societies who request it.

*Qu.* 35. By whom shall it be administered?

*A.* By those persons whom the Quarter Board may judge proper.

At the First Conference at Hull, in the following year, we have minutes confirming these arrangements (*Qu.* 48, 49). There is the addition that Society Stewards 'shall prepare what is necessary for the Lord's Supper and the Love-feasts'. Various Conferences confirmed these regulations,<sup>10</sup> and in 1828 we have the instruction 'that the Superintendent do attend to . . . administering the sacrament'. There is an 1836 minute which may be interpreted as implying that the sacrament was held once a quarter.

The increasing interest shown by *Conference Minutes* prepares us for the recognition of the value of the sacrament given in the Reading Conference of 1841. While there are no known reports of the observance of the sacrament at any Conference prior to 1841 the importance attached to it on this occasion is shown by the fact that two thirds of the space allotted in the *Magazine* to the Conference is occupied by a description of this service.<sup>11</sup> It is significant that the description is by Hugh Bourne himself, who in the two previous numbers of the *Magazine* had written articles explaining the meaning of the Sacramental Bread. The account strongly supports the presumption that the setting was entirely new, and that many who attended had had little previous opportunity of sharing in the rite.

Hugh Bourne, his brother James, and William Clowes officiated. The simple details given in the account were obviously for those unfamiliar with the rite. With his strong adherence to the principle of total abstinence Hugh Bourne took the opportunity of pointing out that 'our Lord in instituting the sacrament, did not use the word "wine"', a statement, which, he says 'caused some surprise'. Great emphasis, too, was laid on the fact that 'our blessed Lord instituted it with unleavened bread', and this also was followed in the observance. Finally, at the close of the account, we have the quaint paragraph: 'Our friends had prepared a pretty large quantity of unleavened bread. This turned out rather pleasantly; as at the close many of the delegates wished for and obtained each a piece of the

\* *Conference Minutes*: 1822, 1828, 1832, 1835, 1836, 1843.

<sup>10</sup> 1822, 1824, 1828.

<sup>11</sup> *Primitive Methodist Magazine*, September 1841.

bread that remained, to take with them to their respective Circuits; and others obtained pieces also. And Brother Joseph Preston, Superintendent preacher in Brinkworth Circuit, having come over to Reading, several delegates applied to him for the recipe for preparing the sacramental cup, as it is, and has been in use in that, and in some other circuits.' This is followed by an even quainter recipe for making sacramental bread—which should be left in the care of the Circuit Steward—and one for making sacramental wine.

The strange picture of the Conference delegates returning to their Circuits with pieces of unleavened bread should not make us miss the earnestness with which these men sought to avail themselves of all that would assist their religious life, and, to quote the words with which Hugh Bourne finishes his description: 'The nearer we can follow the example of our blessed Lord, the better; as it will be a more effectual means of increasing our faith, and opening our mind to instruction.'

HERBERT G. MARSH

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## THE CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT<sup>1</sup>

THE ANCIENT conviction of the Christian Church that the Old Testament is the abiding Word of God was never more warmly embraced by the scholars of the Church than today. This is no doubt largely due to the fact that *alttestamentler*, *neutestamentler*, and theologian have alike experienced the disastrous consequences of the attempt during the inter-war period to delete the Old Testament from the Church's Canon of Scripture. We stand now in a reaction in favour of the Old Testament which may be in some ways exaggerated but nevertheless constitutes a return to a more healthy and more accurate estimate of these documents than prevailed twenty or thirty years ago. No longer do we dismiss the Hebrew Scriptures as the mere *praeparatio evangelii*, or as the now transcended early rungs of the ladder of progressive revelation; rather we acknowledge them as our fathers did as the abiding and therefore in some sense contemporary Word of God.

While, however, we are thus returning to the traditional Christian estimate of the Old Testament, we are also coming face to face with a problem which the 'evolutionary-progressive revelation' view avoided, but which has otherwise been a very real difficulty from the time of the Epistle of Barnabas, and of Marcion onward: to wit, how can a book which is marred by such puerilities, immoralities, and sub-Christian teachings, still be regarded as the Word of God? Not only must we grapple afresh with that problem, but we must do so bereft of the one real answer which the Christian Church, tutored by Philo, ever found: the answer of allegory. The Old Testament which we acknowledge as the Word of God must be honestly that which records a revelation expressed in terms of primitive religious ideas, customs and ethic, but which nevertheless is of an abiding, indeed eternal, worth. If the Hebrew Scriptures are still to be proclaimed as the Word of God it must be in the light of, not in defiance of, the work of men like Robertson Smith, Frazer, Hooke, Mowinckel, and Engnell.

How far is the attempt to meet this difficulty the proper task of an Old Testament Theology?

It is generally agreed that Old Testament Theology is at least a systematic presentation of the doctrinal content of the Hebrew Scriptures, but if for the moment we accept that definition we must observe that such a Theology is not easily attained. The Old Testament is a fairly large collection of documents, composed over a period of some thousand years, edited and re-edited and apparently possessing no inherent unity other than that of history. To reduce its manifold ideas to any kind of system is difficult and all the more so because on quite important subjects there may be two or more divergent teachings—for example, the Messianic doctrine of the unbroken continuity of the Davidic Royal House, and of the particular scion of that House, the *Tsemach* or Branch; or, the prophetic and the priestly understanding of sin. Again, ideas which are to the fore in the earlier period may disappear from view in the middle period only to be prominent again in the last period. Once we free ourselves from the evolutionistic dogma that the historically later is the theologically more advanced, we are left without any cri-

<sup>1</sup> A paper read to the Bristol Theological Society, 14th March 1952.

terion of what is 'higher' or 'lower', what is the rule, and what only the exception which proves it. (We might perhaps bring in some standard from outside, but that is a procedure to which there are grave objections, as we shall see.) Thus N. H. Snaith disagrees with O. C. Quick because the latter accepts the priestly view of sin as the norm, and the prophetic as the aberrant, whereas he himself prefers to reverse the process. If we are to depend solely on the Old Testament for our scale of values, how shall we arbitrate between them? On what principles is the selection and arrangement of our materials to proceed? Thus even an Old Testament Theology which aims no higher than at achieving a systematic and coherent presentation of the doctrinal content of the Hebrew Scriptures is not easily to be attained.

This difficulty is emphasized if we consider briefly the history of this subject. The older use of the Scriptures as an armoury of proof-texts precluded any recognition of the need or possibility of the discipline we now know as Biblical Theology. With the coming of more liberal views, Gabler in 1787 wrote his *De iusto discrimine Theologiae Biblicae et Dogmaticae* and as Procksch remarks made a distinction between systematic and historical Theology which has not since been ignored. Thus Old Testament Theology has been recognized as the task of the Old Testament scholar, but as a theological as well as a biblical discipline, and one which constitutes the first of a series of such disciplines—Old Testament Theology, New Testament Theology, Historical Theology, Dogmatic Theology, Natural Theology, and Systematic Theology, the last being the Queen of Theologies as she is of Sciences all.

But no sooner was the new movement brought to birth than its very existence was threatened. It was, as we have seen, to some extent the child of Rationalism, and it was this parent which threatened to destroy all study of the Old Testament altogether; but in the early nineteenth century, De Wette and Herder brought the enthusiasm of the Romantic Movement to bear upon the Old Testament, and however much the study of the Old Testament as inspired and authoritative scripture may have waned, the study of it as a human document—full of interest for the historian, the sociologist, and the student of the history of religions—grew and developed and has continued so to grow until this present day. But that there could be an articulated systematic presentation of the doctrines of the Old Testament grew more and more doubtful as the century proceeded. Eichrodt, to whose account of the nineteenth century I am indebted, remarks that Beck and Hoffman tried in the middle century to present such a Theology, but the dogmatic systems they imposed upon the Old Testament militated against the success of their work. In the last quarter of the century, Oehler (1873), Dillmann (1895), and especially Schultz (English translation 1893, second edition 1895, fifth German edition 1896), were more successful. In this country there was a by no means negligible little book by W. H. Bennett in 1895; translations of Oehler, Schultz, and Piepenbourg; and the standard work of A. B. Davidson which, however, appeared only posthumously in 1904. From that time on, the history of Hebrew Religion, as distinct from the Theology of the Old Testament, has in this country reigned supreme. The teaching of this prophet or that book has been discussed, the similarities and dissimilarities of Hebrew and other semitic religions closely investigated, or the development of Hebrew Religion in its historical sequence faithfully exhibited, but no attempt has been made to give a systematic presenta-

tion of the doctrinal content of the Old Testament as a whole. The most that has been attempted is H. Wheeler Robinson's *Religious Ideas of the Old Testament* and Snaith's *Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament*. Even on the Continent, the study languished until in 1933 Eichrodt again produced a true Old Testament Theology. This was followed by Heinisch, who gave us a Catholic Theology in 1940, and this has been revised and published in English in America in 1950. Also in 1950 there appeared Procksch's *Theologie der Alten Testaments*, but that again was a posthumous work. Baab has also published an Old Testament Theology in America in 1949, but this I have not seen.

To this brief survey we append two comments. The first is that such a survey emphasizes the important distinction between an Old Testament Theology and a History of Hebrew Religion. The latter is indeed a legitimate and most necessary part of the *alttestamentler's* task. Moreover, it is only on the basis of its very considerable achievements that the Old Testament Theologian can attempt his task. Thus Schultz very properly gives a chronological account of Israel's religion in his first main division, and only proceeds to a topical and systematic treatment in the second main division of his work. But the distinction between the two disciplines is more than that one is based on the other or that one is a chronological treatment and the other a topical and systematic. Eichrodt attempted to state the essential difference between them in a very interesting article, so long ago as 1928: *Hat die alttestamentliche Theologie noch selbständige Bedeutung innerhalb der alttestamentliche Wissenschaft?* He recognizes that any History of Hebrew Religion is inevitably something more than a mere chronicle of events and quotes Spranger with approval when he says that *'eine Geschichtswissenschaft ohne Geschichtsphilosophie nicht gibt'*. But the difference between Old Testament Theology and the History of Hebrew Religion is to be found in the particular philosophy or set of assumptions which the Old Testament Theologian brings to his task, to wit, the Christian faith as displayed in the New Testament. Thus Old Testament Theology is the systematic presentation of the teaching of the Old Testament viewed in the light of the belief that 'the continuation of the lines of development must, at least for the theologian, find their goal in the thought-world of the New Testament'.<sup>2</sup> We shall return to this statement of the differentia in a moment, but we notice at present the clear distinction between the two disciplines and observe that continued activity in the one can never make good the present inactivity in the other.

The other comment is on the resultant situation in the contemporary life of the Church. Preachers still make use of the incomparable range of stories to be found in the Old Testament and still regard that book as an anthology of sacred pieces of a venerable character suitable for reading in public worship. Where, however, a lectionary is not imposed by ecclesiastical authority, the Old Testament Lesson is often ignored and when included the choice is generally made from a narrow range of fairly well-worn pieces. As far as the preacher's use of the Old Testament is concerned, we may illustrate it by referring to the Anglo-Catholic missioner, who built his series of addresses around a number of characters and situations taken from *Pilgrim's Progress*, but the theology he expressed was not that of Bunyan and English Calvinism, but of Newman and Gore and Anglo-Catholicism. Similarly the Old Testament figures, stories, passages, may

<sup>2</sup> Z.A.T.W. (1929), N.F.6, p. 88.



be borrowed to point a moral or adorn a tale, but there is little recognition of any inherent doctrine, or indeed of any unity of structure in the Old Testament. The missionary in our illustration would, of course, be well aware of what he was doing. The average preacher today, if questioned on the subject, would I suggest, not, but might well reply in classic words: 'I did not so much as hear that there was an Old Testament Theology.' As in the original case, the ignorance is traceable to a faulty theological education.

But that we cannot be content to leave the matter where it is, is made clear by the reflection that if the Old Testament has no inherent theological relevance, why should we continue to read it as scripture in our services? Why not substitute *Pilgrim's Progress* or the *Imitation of Christ* or the poems of Robert Browning? For even the more obtruse parts of this last could not be more unintelligible to the ordinary worshipper than the general run of the Hebrew prophets. Either then we must rediscover the inherent theological validity of the Old Testament or be prepared to release it from our Canon of Scripture, and abandon it altogether.

We reviewed the history of Old Testament Theology, in order to see more clearly the nature of such a Theology and it has been revealed as an orderly presentation of the doctrinal content of the Old Testament. As such, however, it does not meet the situation from which this paper started out—that since the attempt during the inter-war years to dispose quietly of the Old Testament proved so disastrous to the Christian economy, the scholars of the Church have returned to the traditional Christian estimate of the Old Testament as the abiding Word of God, and are therefore compelled to face afresh the immense difficulty of the heterogeneous character of the contents of the Old Testament. How can we meet that difficulty on the literal and not allegorical level of the Old Testament? Also, how can we indicate the doctrinal significance of the Old Testament for our day? That is, how can we display its eternal and therefore contemporary relevance? No one has asked for this to be done with more pertinence than H. Cunliffe Jones, in his book *The Authority of the Biblical Revelation* (1945), which begins from the need for 'an adequate theological doctrine of the Bible', though most readers appear to think that he asked the questions better than he answered them. Nevertheless, it is of immense value to pose the question rightly and recognition is due to Cunliffe Jones for having drawn attention to the right question. But as C. R. North pointed out in his presidential address to the Old Testament Society (January 1949) on 'Old Testament Theology and the History of Old Testament Religion', the study of Old Testament Theology has traditionally been an historical discipline and the present demand is for something more than that: 'Whether it be Theology of the Old Testament or History of Hebrew Religion, what we are being asked for is something rather different. . . . If what you want is something that shall be relevant to the needs of today, both are under suspicion of dealing with what is past and done with; . . . they are mainly of academic interest and people today are asking for something of more immediate and practical value.'<sup>1</sup> If then the *alttestamentler* accepts Cunliffe Jones's challenge—and North himself says that if the task is to be attempted it is better that the Old Testament scholar should undertake it, since 'if it is left to those who have no specialist knowledge they may proceed from wrong premises'—if he accepts the task, how shall he commence upon it?

<sup>1</sup> *S.J.T.*, Vol. II, No. 2, p. 116.

His sense of the difficulty of his assignment will be overwhelming for he is being asked to recognize a whole new area as part of the Old Testament theologian's field, even though, as we have seen, the difficulties of the task in its simpler, purely historical form were already very great. The task is three-fold:

(a) There must be a selection of material. Here we shall need some criterion by which to distinguish between what is good and what is bad, what is ephemeral and what is lasting, what is normative and what is anomalous.

(b) We shall need to find some way of articulating the selected teachings into a system, a structure of thought which may be rightly called a Theology. Here we revert to the article by Eichrodt and ask whether to say that Old Testament Theology is the teaching of the Old Testament viewed from a New Testament stand-point is satisfactory. To describe or define our subject in that way is to acknowledge that we must bring some external standard of reference to our task. But if we do that, are we not admitting the right of other people to bring some other external standard of reference and impose some other quite alien structure upon the Old Testament? Is what we do different in principle from what the allegorists did, or indeed the Marcionites themselves? There would seem to be a strong case to be made out for those scholars like H. H. Rowley who say that a valid Old Testament Theology must be reached on the basis of the Old Testament alone. Yet both Jewish and Christian scholars have failed to find any inherent and coherent doctrinal structure in the Old Testament. This is indeed the chief difficulty in attempting even the older and simpler form of such a Theology.

(c) The contemporary relevance, arising out of its abiding worth, must be clearly and convincingly exhibited. It must be shown to be, as a unitary whole, the living Word of God, and as truly so for us as for the Christians of the New Testament.

There are 'escapists', as they call themselves, who consent to be trussed up by their assistant with much rope and many knots, but who succeed in freeing themselves because the assistant so ties one important knot that a pull on the right rope releases it, and from that beginning all the rest follows. So, too, in this instance, the task we have envisaged is only possible if first there exists some vital principle or governing conception to which all the rest may be related in such a way that the Old Testament may display an inherent structure. There is such a factor, but it is not to be found in the Old Testament but the New.

In St Luke's account of the Resurrection, there is a striking emphasis upon the new interpretation of the Old Testament which the fact of the Resurrection has made available to the primitive Church. The disciples on the way to Emmaus were foolish and slow of comprehension in that they had not previously understood from the Old Testament that suffering, death and resurrection was the appointed path of the Messiah, and 'beginning from Moses and from all the prophets he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself'. After his departure, what they recalled most readily was how Jesus' exposition of scripture had made their hearts to burn within them, and again when they had returned to Jerusalem and Jesus appeared to the whole company, he said: 'These are my words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, how that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their mind, that they

might understand the scriptures; and he said unto them, 'Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day.' (Luke 24<sup>44-46</sup>). The same feature is strongly emphasized in 2 Corinthians 3, Stephen's speech in Acts, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and many another passage.

In what does this new understanding of the Old Testament consist? Briefly that the primitive Church saw Jesus plainly foretold in the Hebrew Scriptures. 'Christ died for our sins, κατὰ τὰς γραφάς in accordance with the scriptures . . . he was raised the third day in accordance with the scriptures . . .' (1 Corinthians 15). That is, not that in Isaiah 53 or Hosea 6, you can find words which while originally applying to other situations may be retained verbally, but in meaning altered, so as to refer to the death and resurrection of Jesus; but rather that these events were in accord with the whole drift of scripture. No man who had understood the aims and methods and character of Yahweh in the Old Testament would have difficulty in seeing that a redemptive life and death and a vindictory resurrection was just the very way the Messiah would tread when He came to fulfil Yahweh's purposes. The difficulty was that no one had understood God's nature and ways as expressed in the Old Testament, but when this was once manifested in Jesus Christ they looked back to the familiar scriptures and found that this same pattern now confronted them on every page. It is as if a man were in a large room, the walls of which are covered by an apparently designless wall-paper, a tangled riot of leaves, stems, tendrils, flowers and branches, which present no order or pattern to his eye as it struggles to comprehend the vast surface: but where over the door there is a small area only, he at once recognizes that five of the flowers constitute a 'domino-five' pattern on which all the rest of the detail depends. When he now looks back to the walls again, 'domino-fives' impinge on his vision from every side of the room. So, too, the disciples having once seen the pattern of redemptive suffering and vindictory resurrection in the life and death and resurrection of Jesus, looked back to the Old Testament and were startled to discover that that is the character of the Old Testament from beginning to end. It is true they tended to find this pattern in the small detail of verbal echo as well as in the grand sweep of events and ideas, but that they found it in the minutiae is eloquent testimony to the fact that they also found it in the large masses. Stephen's speech in Acts 7 is of particular importance on that point and so is the Epistle to the Hebrews. Thus the clue to the Old Testament is Jesus Christ, in His soteriological significance. Nor, I suggest, is that quite the same thing as what Eichrodt said, differently expressed. 'The thought-world of the New Testament' is something other than the Old Testament in a way which Jesus is not. Nor is it sufficient to view the Old Testament as the preparation of the historical ground of the Incarnation. The Old Testament is the Word of God in its own right and the clue is Jesus Himself in His soteriological significance. For it is important to observe that while Jesus is Himself not of the Old Testament, equally truly He is not foreign to it. His manner of life was laid down for Him and the path that He must tread was pre-determined: not, we may suppose, in its detail or physical event but in its purpose and method. 'The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many' (Mark 10<sup>45</sup>). What manner of person Jesus was, His refusal in the desert to walk other roads and His determination to tread the path of redemptive suffering and to trust to divine vindication, all this was determined for Him by what He read in the Old Testament. Jesus

found the Divine Pattern in the Old Testament and translated it into new fact when He lived and died and rose again.

Here then I suggest we have the only basis for a true Theology of the Old Testament, and that for the following reasons:

(i) The principle of *kenosis* which incarnation involves readily enables us to see that God's Word must be spoken in the actual context of God's people, and that the puerilities, immoralities about which complaint is often made are the necessary historical *σῶμα* in which the *πνεῦμα* of revelation must of necessity clothe itself. But in and through those very things the Word of redemptive suffering and vindictory glory is divinely spoken.

(ii) By relating the divergent teachings of the Old Testament to Him, we have a principle of selection which enables us to make with confidence the value-judgements which are involved.

(iii) By relating Old Testament teachings to Him, the soteriological significance of the Old Testament is clearly displayed and we find them articulating themselves, after the manner of the bones in the Valley of Vision, into a system, to wit, a Theology integral to the Old Testament.

(iv) But insofar as the Old Testament is shown to be displaying the distinctive pattern of redemptive suffering, that is, the forgiveness of sins and the vindication of the righteous, it is of a piece with the New Testament and speaks directly and immediately to our need in this present day. The Old Testament and the New Testament are in essence not two revelations, but one. The New is indeed implicit in the Old, the Old is explicit in the New. Both are the contemporary and abiding Word of God.

(v) Lastly, because Jesus is Himself the product of the Old Testament, and modelled Himself on what He found there, we may be sure that this theological structure is not one imposed on the Old Testament from without, but it is deeply and indigenously there. In displaying that structure we shall have gained what the simple Christian in every generation arrives at by unerring instinct—or should I say inspiration?—the Christian Theology of the Old Testament.

S. B. FROST

## TWO STAGES OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

**T**HE PATTERN of John Wesley's Christian experience has been left deeply imprinted upon the Methodist Church. Some complain that it is a weakness in us that we have been so excessively influenced by what happened to one man. 'Why,' it is asked, 'should his experience become a kind of strait jacket into which all his spiritual descendants should be forced?'

If what happened to John Wesley had been something odd and unprecedented, there would have been ground for this complaint. The importance of his experience, however, is that it was not by any means abnormal. Rather it was representative. In Wesley's spiritual pilgrimage God chose to etch out, in vivid, striking lines, certain fundamental truths of the message of the New Testament, truths which are perpetually in danger of being overlooked, but which are indeed an integral part of the Christian Gospel. The importance of his experience lies just here, that it became under God the point at which these truths, so often blurred and vague, came into clear, sharp focus, so that even the spiritually short-sighted are enabled to see them distinctly.

At the risk of labouring what, among Methodists, is familiar, let us look briefly at the spiritual pilgrimage of John Wesley. It falls into two distinct periods, and the year in which he reached the comparatively mature age of thirty-four is the dividing line between them, and the precise moment of demarcation, 24th May 1738. The earlier period we speak of as the first stage of his Christian life, and the later period as the second stage.

There never was a time in Wesley's life when he deliberately rejected the claims of Christ upon him. He was brought up in a deeply Christian home. He had accepted Christ as Lord at his mother's knee, and as a boy he set himself to obey God's commandments. Even during the disturbed years of adolescence, he never ceased to read the Bible, attend Church, and say his prayers. When, however, he yielded to his father's eager persuasion and agreed to become a candidate for Holy Orders, that decision was accompanied by a new determination to put his whole heart into his Christian allegiance. He set himself, he tells us, 'to conquer every sin, whether in word or deed or inward thought,' and at first appears to have been not dissatisfied with what he achieved. At that time indeed he doubted not but that he was a good Christian, 'since he was doing so much, and living so good a life'.

Misgivings, however, began to disturb his complacency. He felt he must do still more in the service of God, in order that nothing should be lacking from what was needed to establish his righteousness before God, and assure his salvation. So he observed fasts twice a week; he cut out of his life all pleasures and extravagances, using the money thus saved to relieve the distress of the unfortunate. He visited the prisons, and assisted the poor and the sick.

Still the misgivings continued. He must do yet more, and the harder and more distasteful it was, the more likely it was to commend him to God, and provide him with a credit balance in that last dread reckoning of which his conscience was now afraid. So he went as a missionary to serve God in the new lands of North America, only to find that there his misgivings grew to the point of despair.

He himself describes the kind of Christian he was at this stage. The words are taken from his sermon, 'The Almost Christian'. 'I avoided all evil; I used every opportunity of doing good to all men; I constantly and carefully used all the public



and all the private means of grace; I endeavoured after a steady seriousness of behaviour, and did all this in sincerity, having a real design to serve God, and a heart-desire to do His will in all things. Yet all this time I was but "almost a Christian".

We have seen that Wesley had been increasingly afflicted with misgivings, that there was something wrong with his Christian life. He knew that inwardly at any rate he was not successful in obeying fully the law of Christ, and he had no sense of the Peace of God in his heart; still less did he find any real joy or happiness in his religious life. This alone would not perhaps have unduly disturbed him, since he knew of no grounds for expecting the realization of these good things during this earthly life. But he met some Christians who told him that these things should be expected, and even claimed to have found what he had assumed was unobtainable. They were the Moravian Christians, who rejoiced in peace with God, and spoke of the power of God in their lives as giving victory over every evil thing. Moreover, their conduct was not at variance with their profession. They were humble men and women, fearless in the presence of threatening death, really happy in God, and with love toward all in their hearts. It was their witness that this had come to them, not at all by their own effort, but as the free unmerited gift of God through Christ.

Moreover, they showed Wesley that all this was clearly promised in the Bible, and then his last defences were down. He knew his own need, for he was not living victoriously over sin and he was not happy in his religion, and now he had been robbed of his one source of comfort—the assurance that his plight was an unavoidable predicament, inseparable from our sorry human lot. He was nearly at breaking point in complete self-despair. He felt himself to be an utter failure, and he had no resources left within himself from which to derive new hope and energy.

That was God's moment and God took charge. The independence of sin is what excludes God from most men's lives. With Wesley it was the independence of a self-achieved righteousness. But it was still independence toward God. Now all that was gone, and only his need cried out to God. If God could not meet that need, it never would be met at all. But God did meet it. How or why, he could not precisely tell. But peace with God, the inward token of the forgiveness of sin, filled his soul; a new spiritual power flooded in, a power which proved adequate to turn moral defeat into victory. And it was all God's doing, every bit of it. His part had been merely to accept in his helplessness this gift from God, and to give thanks in wonderment.

It was an experience which transformed a very conscientious and determined little clergyman (who was, for all his desperate earnestness, ineffective and heavy hearted) into a true prophet of God, with the assurance of God in his heart, and the fire of God's Spirit upon his lips.

What is the essential difference between these two stages in Wesley's life? It does not lie in the goal at which he aimed. In each case he aimed at complete obedience to the will of God. The difference lay, not in the goal, but in the method of attaining it.

In the first stage, though he spoke of God's help, the real motive power had to be found within his own will. He saw the kind of man he must try to be, and with set jaw and strained brow, set himself the task of being that kind of man.

In the second stage, all confidence in self had gone. Self had been utterly

abandoned to God; and not only the bad self, but the good-intentioned self also. The motive power is no longer the determined will, but the Spirit of God infused into his life. The first stage is marked by a determination to offer to God the best measure of obedience he can; the second by the glad and grateful acceptance of the ever-renewed gift of God.

It would, however, be a mistake to regard the second stage as a mere alternative to the first. It is rather the complement of it. The two together, properly blended and ordered, make the complete whole. The first stage should make us realize our need of the second; and the second bring the enabling power by which the goal, so wearily sought in the first, can at last be realized. The first stage is good, so far as it goes. If it lead us to know our need, it has done the work God meant it to do. But here lies the great tragedy: many remain in it to the end. Wesley himself said of it, that it is the 'state which most who are called Christians are content to live and die in'. That is why in Wesley's sermons there is not only unceasing commendation of the free unmerited gifts of God, but also reiterated and emphatic warning against the danger of lingering on indefinitely in the twilight of Stage One.

These truths, however, are valid, not because of Wesley's experience, but because they are rooted and grounded in the New Testament.

In the first place, we find the essence of these two stages of the Christian life reflected in the very division of our Bible into the Old and the New Testaments. The word 'Testament' is a translation of the same Greek word which is normally rendered 'covenant' in the text of the Bible. 'Covenant' was the name used for the relationship established between God and His people. The Old Covenant, mediated by Moses, was, on the one side, God's gracious promise of guidance, protection, and provision. Man's part was his solemn pledge to obey the will of God as made known in the Law.

The Old Covenant served its purpose by keeping sinful man aware of obligations he would have liked to forget. But it proved inadequate. Man often did not want to obey its commands; or, if he did want to, he found he could not, owing to some inherent weakness or perverted impulse of his nature. This sad insufficiency of the Old Covenant was realized by Jeremiah. He saw the need of a new covenant, different from the old one, in that God's Law should be inscribed not on tablets of stone, external to man's nature, and cold and unresponsive to man's need—but upon the human heart itself, upon his impulses and desires. And this must be God's doing, for man cannot do it. It is God who must so touch and change the wayward human heart as to enable it not only to recognize what is right, and to acknowledge the obligation that it imposes, but also to be itself so transformed that it comes to love what is commanded and to find eager joy in its fulfilment.

If the Old Covenant lays down what man must do to please God, the New Covenant was to provide the means by which God can so infuse new life into man that he can at last begin to live in obedience to God's will.

That dream of Jeremiah remained a dream until our Lord came to earth, to live and die for us, and to make His blood, as He Himself explained, the seal and ratification and inauguration of that New Covenant. Through Him the dream of centuries became present reality. The heart of religion was no longer a stern sense of duty, but a God-renewed life.

The same difference emerges in the contrast which the New Testament draws

between John the Baptist and Jesus. Our Lord Himself declared that in John we are confronted with the last and greatest representative of the dispensation of the Law and the Prophets, that is, of the Old Covenant. In the spirit of that Covenant John called on men to repent, to turn from known evil, and to make outward confession of their past failures and their present penitence by openly receiving baptism. It was fundamentally an act of the human will to which he summoned them, a good act, an act directed toward obedience to God's will; but it was man's act. He was near enough to the new dispensation to realize with painful vividness that what he offered was only provisional and incomplete. 'I baptize with water', he announced, and that kind of baptism symbolized man's intention to live under God's commands. 'But One is coming after me who will baptize you with Fire', that is, as our evangelists interpret it, for us 'with the Holy Spirit'. And everywhere in the New Testament the coming of the Holy Spirit is the free gift of God, never a reward for man's endeavours. As such the Gift of the Holy Spirit is the Hall Mark of the New Covenant.

The same contrast is implicit in the meaning of Pentecost. The disciples were men who had left all to follow Jesus. Their devotion to Him was beyond question. Even their failure at the time of the crucifixion does not cast doubt upon their devotion, only upon their ability always to live up to it. But that devotion is now clearly not enough, not even when it is reinforced by the assurance of the Risen presence of their Lord in their lives. Still more is needed before they can be counted ready for their future task. So Jesus says: 'Wait, until ye be clothed with power from on high, . . . and ye shall receive this power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you.' This promised gift, free, undeserved, life-transforming, was bestowed upon them on the occasion of Pentecost, and life for them began again on a new level of possibility from that day, a life characterized, not primarily by their devotion to Him (though that was in fact greater than ever), but by a new awareness of the power of God in their lives.

Nowhere, however, in the New Testament is the distinction between these two stages so clear and emphatic as in the experience and teaching of the Apostle Paul. When he became a Christian, it was not merely that he accepted Christ, in preference to the Law and the Prophets, as the supreme interpreter of God's will. Through Jesus Christ he found two other things—a new relationship to God, and an entirely new approach to righteousness of life.

Before his great moment on the Damascus Road, just as for Wesley before 24th May 1738, he had been an intensely religious man. His religion had consisted of a vivid awareness of the claims of God upon his life, and a determination to fulfil those claims to the very last letter. His hope of standing well with God, so he believed, depended entirely upon his success. The Law was the explicit expression of God's claims upon him. So obedience to the Law was the core of his religion.

Because he was a man of sensitive conscience, who would not brook dishonest compromise or indulge in comforting self-deception, his attempt to live out the Law of God in the strength of his own resolve led him to despair at his own feebleness, and cringing fear before the awful judgement of God. The anguished cries we hear in Romans 7 are surely the remembered torture of his own restless heart: 'To will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not. For the good which I would

I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I practise. . . . O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?' There was a time when he did not know any answer. But there came a time when the answer rang clear and unmistakable in his soul: 'God can, through Jesus Christ. Thanks be to Him.'

That was the answer as he found it. He had been all wrong with God, because of his inability to live up to the moral law. He had continued to fail before the claims of the moral law, because he was all wrong with God. There was no breaking the vicious circle from his side, until the despair of helplessness overtook him, and in utter need he abandoned himself to Christ. And from Christ, utterly undeserved and unexpected, there came as a free gift from God, all that he had striven hardest to achieve: Peace with God, Forgiveness for the past, a sense of communicated power that gave him the assurance of future victory where there had been defeat. 'If any man is in Christ,' he wrote later, 'he is a new creation. The old things (struggle, strain, muddle, failure) are passed away. Behold they are become new. But,' he reminds us emphatically, for this is the one key that opens the stubborn lock, 'it is all God's doing' (2 Corinthians 5:17-18).

Sometimes in his letters he speaks impatiently of the Law, as he remembers its utter failure to provide him with what he most needed. But he does not make the mistake of some who pass in an unforgettable experience from stage One to stage Two, and dismiss the first stage as merely useless, an unfortunate phase to be regretted and despised. His words leave us in no doubt of the relief and joy he knew when at last he found deliverance from its intolerable bondage. But it had served a good purpose. Through it he had learned the high claims of God upon his life, and his own inability to fulfil them as he should. It had therefore taught him his need of God's delivering grace and empowering Spirit. The Law had been, as he so well expresses it, his tutor, to bring him to Christ.

Nor did he imagine that the second stage entirely superseded the first. Rather the second stage raised a man to a new vantage point from which he could now hope to obey the will of God. That is what Paul means when, of the wonderful gift of God through Christ, he asks: 'Does this annul the Law?' 'No', he answers, 'it establishes the Law', that is, it provides the one and only adequate driving power by which a man can be enabled to fulfil the moral law as he should.

We find another New Testament contrast between stage One and stage Two in the passage in Acts about Apollos, the eloquent preacher from Alexandria. He came to Ephesus, while Paul's colleagues, Aquila and Priscilla, were there, and made a deep impression upon them. We read this about him: 'He was a learned man, mighty in the Scriptures, fervent in spirit. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he taught carefully the things concerning Jesus, knowing only the baptism of John the Baptist.' We notice that he had learned 'the way of the Lord', that is, the moral standards of the Christian life, but he knew only the baptism of John the Baptist, that is a baptism which represented an act of repentance and decision, an act of the human will. This baptism had not conferred the gift of the Holy Spirit, as fully as Christian baptism was expected to do.

Aquila and Priscilla recognized his gifts, but missed from his message elements which were to them of prime importance. So with true Christian courtesy, without criticism or complaint, they took him aside privately and 'expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly'.

The paragraph that immediately follows the account of this incident in Acts is clearly very closely related to it, and one passage helps to interpret the other. In this second section Paul has come back to Ephesus, and is visiting isolated Christian groups in the area. He comes to one, not hitherto known to him, and is perplexed by the kind of Christianity he finds there, until it emerges that the members of it know nothing of the Holy Spirit. This leads on to a question about the significance of their baptism, and Paul learns that in their experience it had meant only what John's baptism meant, the dedication of the will in obedience to God. This means that they are following Jesus as a revealer of a new way of life, a higher law, but they know nothing of the gift of the Holy Spirit, and His power to lift all life to new levels of possibility. Both they and Apollos, apparently, had been living within stage One, and were unaware of anything better beyond it, until other Christians opened their eyes to new horizons.

The authority within the New Testament for this contrast between the two stages of the Christian life is so clear that one is puzzled to understand why, in the story of the Christian Church, stage Two has so often, and for such long periods, been largely ignored and forgotten. Is it that the remnant of human pride, even in professed Christians, finds it too humiliating to be for ever dependent on the free Grace of God and the free gift of His Holy Spirit? Is it that we resent being placed under a perpetual and ever-growing debt to God, and long to reverse the process and put God at any rate a little into our debt? Or is it that this emphasis seems sometimes a little dangerous to the stern demand of morality? Or is it just too amazingly generous to be believed?

Whatever the cause, this splendid and daring emphasis which we associate especially, though by no means exclusively, with the apostle Paul, has often been neglected within the Christian Church. Even Paul's immediate successors often failed to grasp clearly its real significance. They reproduce his words, out of respect for the apostle, but often with a hollow sound, as if the writers are honouring him with their lips, though their hearts are far from him. Even in the Pastoral Epistles the characteristic Pauline emphasis on the Free Grace of God has largely disappeared, and this is still more noticeable in some of the so-called Apostolic Fathers. The First Epistle of Clement, usually dated about A.D. 96, contains these words: 'We are saved by works, and not by words.' Paul certainly preferred 'works' to mere 'words', but he could never have brought himself to write that we are saved by 'works', that is, by what we do. The Gospel of the Free Grace of God, offered to man, not on the grounds of his worthiness but of his acknowledged need (as proclaimed by our Lord Himself in His parables of the Workers in the Vineyard, and of the Pharisee and the Publican), which Paul made absolutely central to his message, is being replaced by a moralistic interpretation of salvation. We no longer hear much about the futility of man's humanistic pretensions. There is no longer scorn of his imagined self-sufficiency. Rather we find creeping in an assumption that man can fit himself for salvation, and even do more than is strictly necessary, thereby accumulating a kind of credit balance with God. Hermas, for instance, midway through the second century, writes: 'If thou doest any good over and above the commandment of God, thou shalt obtain greater glory for thyself.' This is strange doctrine for a follower of One who said: 'When ye shall have done all the things which are commanded you, say: We are unprofitable servants.'



This tendency to slip away from the spirit of the New Covenant back into the ways of the Old Covenant, often without those concerned realizing what is taking place, seems to be part and parcel of our sinful human nature. But God in His mercy returns again and again with His renewing power in the life of some new Apostle, and a new day begins once more to dawn within the Church. It has been as Harnack so well expressed it: 'The spirit of Paul has worked as a fermenting influence throughout the history of Christendom and, forgotten or ignored by the original Church for centuries, has broken out in explosion after explosion.' Such explosions have occurred in history through the prophetic work, for instance, of Augustine, Luther, Wesley, and many others, all in the great succession of the apostle Paul.

Between these great moments of renewal, however, the drab ordinariness of human prudence seems to dam back the flowing tides of God's Spirit, and the safer, more reasonable methods and expectations of the Old Covenant prevail over the more disconcerting ways of the New.

Nor must we allow ourselves to be deceived into thinking that the mere use of the name of Jesus automatically brings us within the sphere of the New Covenant. It was not so with Apollos; it was not so with Wesley; it is not so today. It is possible to offer to Jesus a most sincere devotion, which is nevertheless in its essential attitude hardly distinguishable from the devotion which Paul, before his conversion, offered to the revered Law of God. Such a devotion is characterized by the acceptance of Jesus Christ as the Lord of all good life, One in whom we see the standard of conduct by which we must try to live, the ideal which our conscience bids us follow.

Twenty-five years ago the chief interest in New Testament circles was the attempt to rediscover what was called the 'Jesus of History', to strip away all later doctrinal and ecclesiastical accretions from the Gospel portrait, so that we may see and hear, not the Jesus of stained-glass windows, but the real, historical figure who lived and taught in Galilee. Those who felt the influence of this movement learned to reverence Jesus as the great Master of men, with a profound understanding of the human heart, a tender sympathy with the unprivileged, a quick anger with all sham and pretence and insincerity, speaking in words that slipped easily into the rhythm of poetry and sparkled with bright flashes of humour. All this brought reality to their religious life and did them good. But it had its dangers, both theological and practical. The practical danger was that the Jesus it presented was readily accepted as Lord and Master, but not so readily as Saviour. He became the touchstone to distinguish between good and evil. He claimed men's obedience and made them long to be like Him. Their highest aim came to be to gain His approval. Two verses, which later gained entrance into the *Methodist Hymn-book* of 1933, expressed exactly the faith and devotion of those who had been captivated by the figure of the Jesus of History:

*Dear Master, in whose life I see  
All that I would, but fail to be,  
Let Thy clear light for ever shine,  
To shame and guide this life of mine.  
Though what I dream and what I do  
In my weak days are always two,  
Help me, oppressed by things undone,  
O Thou, whose deeds and dreams were one!*

That is a characteristic utterance of the Christian in the first stage, and under the influence of the Jesus of History, men's attitude to Him tended to be mainly that. It was a Christian version of the Law, inspiring men to high endeavour and deep loyalty, but in essence a relationship characteristic of the Old Covenant rather than the New. Indeed for many it came to serve the same purpose which the Law served in Paul's. It produced an awareness of their inability to attain what that High Standard required. It induced a sense of helplessness and need which drove them on from devotion to that beloved figure of the human Jesus into full surrender to the eternal Christ, who is the life-giving Spirit.

Even today, though the interest in the Jesus of History has faded and been replaced by other enthusiasms, many Christians still think of Jesus mainly as the ideal to whom they aspire, and this is fundamentally the same kind of faith as that in which Wesley lived up to the age of thirty-four. Moreover, it is all too easy to assume that this attitude to Jesus is the essential thing, and that Christianity has nothing further to offer. The Church is always in danger of this immature kind of Christian faith prevailing over the better kind, and almost excluding it. It is a danger which threatens our Methodist Church no less than others, even though it is our special calling to affirm the better way.

Signs of the onset of this danger are not wanting. We have all heard the plea that children brought up in a Christian home, and with a background of Church life, cannot be expected to enter the Christian life by some memorable crisis such as a sudden conversion, though that may be the way for those who come into the Church from a pagan background. There is of course truth in the assertion that there will be a difference in the Christian experience of these two types. It is true that a Christian home of the best type can do much to bring a young man or woman into the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord, almost as an integral part of the attitude to life which he absorbs from his environment, and which he learns to respect and wishes to perpetuate. But if a Christian home can bring a man into stage One, nothing but the Grace of God in answer to the deep need of our heart can bring him into stage Two.

Do we not also see a further sign of the unobtrusive expansion of the influence of stage One, in the substitution of the word 'decision' for 'conversion'? Now the Methodist Church asks our young people to make a decision for Christ, and to accept Him as Lord of their lives. And we do well. That for most of us is the essential beginning. The tragedy comes when we go on to assume that the act of decision is just another name for 'conversion', and precisely the same thing. It is not the same thing. An act of personal decision is the act which sets us within stage One. But no act of decision can bring us into stage Two. Only God acting in response to our bitter need can bring us there. So, while we must still press for a decision for Christ, we should, having gained it, always seek to point ahead to this still better thing which God has prepared for His children.

Another sign of the prevalence of stage One in our Church is the great difficulty that our young local preachers find with Wesley's Sermons. Almost without exception they are taken aback, perplexed, even antagonized by his provocative sermon on 'The Almost Christian'. What Wesley describes as 'the Almost Christian' is more nearly akin to their own Christian Faith than the fuller kind of Faith to which he invites us. If they speak honestly they can understand the Wesley of pre-con-

version days more easily than the later Wesley. He is more congenial to their stage of experience.

A great responsibility therefore rests on all who are preachers and leaders in the Methodist Church to see to it that the dazzling splendour of the Gospel of the Free Grace of God in Jesus Christ is not slowly toned down, and made ordinary, and merely reasonable, until it becomes little more than a religion of moral endeavour.

Other branches of the Christian Church have their special tasks within the Universal Church, but the responsibility of Methodism is to keep bright and clear the great New Testament Truths whose rediscovery brought Methodism into being.

We must first be sure that we know these truths for ourselves, not just as familiar phrases which we can use in the right context, but as the very truths by which we live. Then, God helping us, we must learn how to communicate these truths to that vast company of loyal and steadfast Church workers, so that the people called Methodists shall not lapse into tired, well-meaning Christians, living on their nerves, but become again a people equipped with the Holy Spirit, and rejoicing in the sure knowledge that in their daily lives they are proving 'the exceeding greatness of God's power toward us'.

C. LESLIE MITTON

## CREATIVE RELIGION

**I**N his *Notes towards the Definition of Culture* Mr T. S. Eliot has, in a tentative way, put forward the suggestion that the culture of a people is an incarnation of its religion. He admits that this is by no means a self-evident fact; he himself finds it elusive. 'I am not sure', he says frankly, 'I grasp it myself except in flashes, or that I comprehend all its implications'. Mr Eliot of course is a poet, and we must suppose that, in advancing this idea, he is speaking as a poet rather than a social philosopher; it is an intuitive idea, difficult of proof by strictly rational means, but not to be dismissed out of hand on that ground alone.

How difficult it is becomes evident when we consider the sense in which he would have us understand the word 'culture'. He does not give to it the restricted meaning it has in common usage, the meaning which Matthew Arnold, for example, had in mind in his own constant use of the word. In *Culture and Anarchy*, it will be remembered, Arnold describes culture—describes rather than defines it—as 'an inward spiritual activity, having for its characters increased sweetness, increased light, increased life, increased sympathy', and repeatedly (as was his manner) he insists that this heightening of awareness is made possible only through an acquaintance with 'the best that is known and thought in the world'. But Mr Eliot objects to this; to a modern reader, he says, it conveys an impression of thinness, and the reason he gives is that it lacks a social background. It restricts culture to the few, to men of taste and education, who in all probability will always be a minority. He himself would extend the word to include the total life of a society; not of its

more refined and conscious members alone, but those who live at all levels of thought, from the highest to the lowest. This is the sense in which the word was used by R. B. Tylor in the title of his book *Primitive Culture*, a sense well understood by anthropologists, and now coming into use among students of more developed societies.

Culture, then, he would have us understand, is '*the whole way of life of a people, from birth to the grave, from morning to night and even in sleep*', and in order that there shall be no mistake as to the sort of things that must be included, Mr Eliot jots down a few of the items: 'Derby Day, Henley Regatta, Cowes, the twelfth of August, a cup final, dog races, the pin table, the dart board, Wensleydale cheese, boiled cabbage cut in sections, beetroot in vinegar, nineteenth-century Gothic churches, and the music of Elgar'. He invites us to make our own lists, 'and then', he says, 'we have to face the strange idea that what is part of our culture is also a part of our *lived religion*'.

A strange idea, certainly; and where Mr Eliot says that it is not clear even to himself except in fleeting glimpses, it would be presumptuous for anyone else to suppose that he can make it plain. Yet one may ask perhaps whether, after all, it is so unthought-of as he is inclined to believe. I rather think that others have had the same idea. In Victorian times, for example, they used to speak of 'Christian England'; it was one of their stock phrases. But the Victorians were not fools. They did not mean that England was a land of regenerate and God-fearing men, any more than the Hebrew prophets thought that all who lived in the Holy Land were men of God. They knew perfectly well that English life had its seamy side, though they were not quite so eager as we are to turn it to the light. Charles Dickens certainly knew as much about the English underworld in his day as Mr Graham Greene does in ours, nor did he try to keep it dark; the chief difference is that he did not use so much bad language in describing it. Yet 'Christian England' meant something to him and his contemporaries, and something that was not derisory. Nor was it merely that Christianity was the religion, real or nominal, of the majority of Englishmen. It was in their blood; whether they practised it or ignored it, whether they affirmed or denied it, whether they sought to observe its moral code or wilfully broke it, it was *there*—there to be practised or ignored, professed or denied, obeyed or broken. The sins of England were part of the religion of England; how, otherwise, did they come to be recognized *as* sins? Christianity had created England, was still creating it; for it worked upon the minds of men and permeated their being like the leaven in the lump of dough.

And so with other cultures: Catholic Spain, Protestant Ulster, or what, more vaguely, we understand by Christendom. None of them is Christian in any satisfactory sense, but the very fact that we find them *un-satisfactory* means that, consciously or unconsciously, we judge them by Christian standards. Vice pays tribute to virtue in all sorts of ways—hypocrisy is only one. The word itself, since it is the antonym of virtue, is a tribute to it; it is only by reference to virtue that vice is recognized and condemned. 'If', said Jesus, 'I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin'. The good resolutions that we make—and break—are part of our Christian confession. We may sin against the light, but it is the light that shows up our sin; and the man who has grown hardened in sin must, as part of the hardening process, gradually have steeled himself against what he knew to be good.

I take it then—if I have not misunderstood Mr Eliot—that it is this or something like it that he has in mind when he says that ‘what is part of our culture is also a part of our *lived* religion’—even if we are evil-livers. No doubt it is more easy to perceive the formative action of religion on society if we go outside Christendom and examine some culture which is more obviously the embodiment and expression of a religion—some society in which no distinction is recognized between religious and secular activities. The Mohammedan world is, or was, such a society. Islam is a totalitarian religion, and its influence is not only pervasive, working from within outwards, but regulative, in the sense that it organizes and controls the life of its adherents. It is, so to speak, not only the gravitational pull which keeps Moslem society erect, but the very bricks and mortar out of which it is put together. This seems to be borne out by the fact that Kemal Pasha, when he set out to rebuild on a new model what remained of the Turkish Empire after the first world-war, found that it could only be done by first uprooting the Moslem religion. In the same way, it is difficult to see that Hindu society could be reformed in any drastic fashion without first shaking off the grip of the religion by which its existing customs and institutions have been determined, and that is just what seems to be happening in India at the present time under the leadership of Mr Nehru, who professes no religious belief. In the Western world the social phenomena are more complex, so that it is less easy to perceive that they too, in spite of their bewildering variety and many contradictions, all stem from the religion in which they are rooted; but at least we can all see that the history of Europe and the Americas would have been a very different story if they had never felt the influence of Christianity.

The truth indeed seems to be that the more complex the culture, the higher the religion. If a religion is totalitarian we may be sure that it is relatively simple, for in order to impose upon society a particular pattern of life, it must rely chiefly on pressure from without; what it permits and what it prohibits must be made explicit, rules of conduct must be carefully specified, and all must have the force of law, or at least of custom—which in practice may be even more rigorous than the law. (I understand that when the Communist rulers of Russia decreed that, in the Moslem provinces, women should give up the practice of veiling, the chief resistance came from the women themselves.) But this is religion at a comparatively low level; it is legalistic, and the law comes before grace; it is external, but the Kingdom of God is within. Because it is simple it can the more readily be made to prevail, but the culture it produces will tend, once it is established, to congeal into a rigid pattern; the very success of the religion will prove a hindrance to the development of the society on which it has been imposed. We can see this in the case of Judaism. It was a theocracy which aimed at nothing less than to make the will of God the law of the land, and as long as it had to struggle with alien cultures it was a living religion; but when at last, after centuries of effort, the idols were extruded and the heathen customs rooted out, it settled down into the lifeless routine of Pharisaism. The prophet gave way to the scribe, and the fierce light of revelation became little more than a candle of legal logic by which the law was interpreted and its applications worked out in detail. Even when Israel was incorporated in the Roman Empire, it was singularly impervious to the culture of the Graeco-Roman world; it remained an undigested lump embedded in the Roman system, taking little from it, and giving little to it. It is significant that the meaning of the word Pharisee is *separated*.



Now it is evident that the term 'Christian culture', if we can even use it at all, does not convey anything like so clear a meaning as the other religious cultures to which I have referred. There have, it is true, been phases and periods in which Christianity also, to all appearance, has imposed its own pattern of life on a whole society; when education, government, custom, the arts, the science, the economics of the community, all looked to the Christian religion as their regulative principle. Throughout the Middle Ages the Church exerted not merely an influence upon, but an authority over, all aspects of the life of Europe which exceeded the authority of any Parliament in the modern world. Geneva again in Calvin's time was a theocracy, and so to a lesser extent was England under the Commonwealth—the Fifth Monarchy Men would, if they could have had their way, have made it entirely so; and some of the Puritan communities in the New World were equally thorough-going. But what looked like the successes of Christianity were in reality its greatest failures, for it could only prevail by ceasing to be true to itself. It was driven to rely on methods which were, to say the least, sub-Christian; on coercion, terrorism, persecution—in the end, on the tortures of the Inquisition; and when Christianity resorts to methods like these it is itself the chief victim.

If this reasoning is sound I shall not, I hope, be accused of paradox if I draw the conclusion that a society which is secular in character may be more Christian in spirit than one which is under the direct control of some religious authority. To make religion the law of the land would not be good for the country, and it would be even worse for the religion. Men must be free to do wrong, or they are not free to do right; they must be free to deny all the teachings of religion, for that is the only condition on which they can ever be convinced of their truth. These are truisms, and it is to be hoped that the Church has learned that it is a delusion to suppose that it can attain its ends by taking short cuts of any kind. It is an essential part of the Christian religion that it should tolerate evil; the wheat and the tares must grow together until the harvest. Impatience may be a deadly sin; the Church must not only do God's work, it must do it in God's way.

The Kingdom of God is within you; it can only prevail as it works from within outwards. So it is in personal life, and in no other way can we hope to have a Christian society. Before you attempt to bake the loaf you must allow time for the yeast to work through the dough. Impatience is the typical fault, not only of Churchmen, but of politicians and reformers; good men in a hurry are always tempted to resort to force. But force is both futile and fatal; futile because, although it may impose a form of goodness, it is powerless to awaken a hearty and willing assent, and may even produce the opposite effect by causing men to detest the goodness they are compelled to practise; and fatal because it corrupts those who exercise it. The good motives that led them to seize power do not survive for long when once they have obtained it. 'So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord'—that, in one form or another, is the cry of the victor over the vanquished, and it is a cruel taunt. The evil that has been crushed has entered into the soul of those who have put it down. To a morally sensitive member of the Labour Party it must have been a matter for shame to observe how, when they were in office, the strong wine of power went to the heads of many who then tasted it for the first time, and gave rise to an arrogance every bit as bad as that which they had resented so bitterly in some members of the former governing class. 'It's our turn now' was a common cry, and the champions of the poor had no pity to spare for the privations of the 'new poor'.

This kind of vindictiveness is always a feature of successful revolutions. Apart from the grace of God, scarcely any man is good enough to be trusted with power over others.

It comes to this, then—that evil must be tolerated, and yet, somehow, it must be overcome. It cannot be put down by force, but that only means that we must arm ourselves with other weapons; the fight is still on. Once again, one recalls Our Lord's saying about the leaven and the dough. In the long run—and it may be a very long run—it is only by the infiltration of the Christian spirit through the carnal mass that makes up secular society in the lump that the changes we seek to bring about can be made. This means that religion is not something apart from the world, a form of self-culture practised by individuals or coteries of like-minded persons. That is Pharisaism, the type to which religion is always reverting, with its attendant evils of illiberalism, censoriousness, and spiritual pride—the besetting sins of sectarians and dissenting bodies. A religion that is practised behind locked doors and closed windows can only induce dullness and, in the end, will fall asleep in a fug of piety. The relaxed and listless state of soul which was the curse of the monastic life—what in the Middle Ages was known as the sin of *accidie*—has its counterpart in the unintelligence, the muddiness of mind, the incuriousness and intellectual sloth, which one still encounters today among so many people who are 'good' in a narrow and exclusive sense.

There is a well-known saying of T. R. Glover's to the effect that the early Christians won their victory over the Roman world because they out-thought, out-lived, and out-died the pagans. It was not by keeping themselves to themselves that they conquered, but by meeting their adversaries on their own ground and proving themselves to be the better men. 'We are but of yesterday', said Tertullian at the end of the second century in a passage that is often quoted, 'and we have filled every place belonging to you, cities, islands, fortresses, towns, assemblies, even the camps, your tribes, your electoral divisions, the palace, the Senate, the law-courts; the only thing we have left to you for yourselves is your temples.' Yet Tertullian was a man of narrow mind who refused to come to terms with Roman civilization and was the sworn enemy of its culture. More characteristic was the attitude of such men as Clement of Alexandria, St Augustine, or St Jerome, who adopted into the Christian religion all that was best in Greek and Roman thought, and accepted all that was most enlightened in the civilization of the Empire, seeing them as a *preparatio evangelica* which, in the providence of God, was there to their hand, and, wisely used, could be made to serve for the furtherance of the Gospel.

But religion is never creative unless it is passionate, and there are two spurs to which passion responds—love and hate. Religion needs both; if love is the lever by which the world must be raised, hate is the fulcrum on which it rests. Though, as we have seen, evils must be tolerated, they must by no means be condoned. The Christian is at liberty to fight with none but moral weapons, but unless he has the fighting spirit in him the sword will sleep in his hand. A man who has ceased to hate evil, in himself and in the world around him—but in himself especially—has ceased to love goodness. 'Be ye perfect', said Jesus, and I do not think we can afford to soften that imperative, as the Revised Version does on grounds not entirely conclusive, into a vague promise or a pious hope. Nothing less than a passion for perfection is enough to keep our moral energies at fighting pitch, and the reverse side of that passion is the 'perfect hatred' of which the psalmist speaks

—hatred of evil, of accommodation, and even of the merely second-best. We should expect of a Christian—does not the Gospel expect of him?—that he should make the most of any talent he possesses; plain good work must be the first of his good works; let him do his job in life as well as he can, whatever that job may be. To do less than the best it is in him to do is to consent to evil.

To act thus is to get to grips with the contemporary world, and there is no other way that I can see. Retreat into a pious backwater, no matter of what sort, is escapism; and the backwater itself, we may be sure, will turn out to be muddy, flat, and stagnant. The only chance of creating a Christian culture is to take hold of the mixed thing we have already got and, in the literal sense of the words, *make the best of it*. To be a Christian ought to mean that nothing shoddy, slack, unworkmanlike, is allowed to pass the scrutiny of one's own exacting conscience. Something of this sort, I take it, is what is meant by out-living the pagans, and in an age like our own, when the complaint everywhere is that quality no longer counts, it is just this extra effort that is needed to keep civilization from slipping. In all the talk about incentives no mention is made of the only one that matters, the incentive from within; but if the engine of the motor-car has broken down, it is no use dangling a bunch of carrots in front of the bonnet. Nothing is too homely or humble to escape this obligation to make the best job of it that you can; the housewife at the sink, the factory-worker on the production-line, no less than the Christian artist, writer, man of science, or man of affairs, the priest or the preacher, is God's fellow-worker, travelling to redeem a creation which is in the bondage of corruption, and waits in earnest expectation for the revealing of the sons of God.

*A servant with this clause  
Makes drudgery divine;  
Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,  
Makes that and the action fine.*

This, as it seems to me, is the simplest and most direct way of setting the leaven of Christian influence to work on the social lump and so begin to transform it into a culture which can be recognized as Christian. But in practice I see little evidence of it among the rank-and-file of those who call themselves Christian people. Even the Church—here I speak of that branch of it which I know best and in which I have worked for a lifetime—is content too often with the third-rate, too often seems even to prefer it to the best; and that in the very business for which it exists, to foster the love of that which is good—the good of every sort. Too often perfection is not a thing to be sought but shunned; the Light Programme, always, rather than the Third. In this respect I seem to see—is this the complaint of an ageing man?—a decline from what I remember, or think I remember. I at least was made to feel that the renewing of human nature meant the whole man, not forgetting his mind; and if we felt ourselves to be ignorant, there was something—a Mutual Improvement Society perhaps—to give us a helping hand. Now there is the Youth Club. Perhaps the young are not so ignorant nowadays; or is it simply that they are more knowing?

W. S. HANDLEY JONES

## THE WORLD FAMILY IN HISTORY

(Continued from p. 117. April 1952)

### THE POST-REFORMATION PERIOD

(2) *The Scientific Revolution.* This had its anticipations, the same as had the Political Revolution. Maurice, referring to Occam and Roger Bacon of the fourteenth century, includes them as pioneers of 'this mighty scientific revolution, which it was the especial privilege of her (England's) sons to accomplish'.<sup>19</sup>

But it was Francis Bacon, contemporary of Shakespeare, who launched the revolution, by the publication of *The New Method*. In it Bacon expounded a new attitude and approach to nature. Instead of bringing ready-made categories of human thought, expecting nature to conform to them, we must become students of her facts and of her ways. If we will be careful to observe, attentive to learn, patient to experiment, nature will impart to us such knowledge of her laws as will give us the key to the use of her powers. So shall we prove the truth of Bacon's famous aphorism, 'Knowledge is Power'. There must be no *a priori* conclusions from abstract principles; we must follow the vital principle of experiment.

(3) *The Philosophical Revolution.* It was inevitable, after Bacon, that the experimental method should be applied to other subjects than physical science. John Locke, undoubtedly influenced by Descartes, yet greatly differing in his approach, led the way in philosophy, in his *Essay on the Human Understanding*. He insists on *beginning at the other end*—the human end. This is Locke's distinctive stand, and it is important. It is revolutionary. Instead of the search for truth in the 'Ocean of Being', we must begin with our own powers of understanding. This revolt was bound to come. It was time to 'begin at the other end'. So far we find Locke helpful. But in limiting the human mind to such knowledge as reaches it through the senses he is the opposite of helpful. Nor can we follow him in his rejection of those predecessors who had found a place for moral and spiritual intuitions. True, Locke wrote on *The Reasonableness of the Christian Religion* but it is a 'reasonableness' externally argued. Spiritual intuition has no more place in his religion than in his philosophy, and the two are never integrated.

Locke's influence was immense, both at home and abroad. His 'common-sense' approach pleased the practical English, while his limitation to 'sense impressions' was welcome in literary and anti-clerical circles at home and abroad. It was especially welcome in France.

Later, in Germany, Kant takes up (not directly from Locke) the study that Locke had begun—'from the human end'—but much more thoroughly than Locke himself. Without the least bias toward the supernatural, and after the most searching examination of the *Pure Reason*, Kant finds himself faced with the demands of the *Practical Reason* for both freedom and for moral authority. Kant is compelled to establish his 'Categorical Moral Imperative' from which he feels bound to postulate a Transcendent Moral Ruler.

But it was in France, in the meantime, that Locke's *negations* wrought most effectively and disastrously. Voltaire, captivated by Locke, virtually adopted his teaching, and adapted it, with all his literary skill, to the French taste. Its limitation to the senses and its contempt for the 'supernatural' was welcomed by Voltaire as allies in his fight against his (and his country's) greatest enemy—clericalism. Locke had left his conception of the 'Social Contract' vague; Rousseau developed his own.

<sup>19</sup> Maurice, *Moral and Metaphysical Philosopher*, II.16.

He attributed all power to the people, regardless of their moral standards, their culture, or their *unfaith*. And so France, borrowing her watch-words from the Christian tradition, moved, under the banner of 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity'—without *Paternity*—to a fate that even her teachers must have deplored.

The German philosophers, aloof from actual life, lived mostly in their 'schools' and their books. Not from them, but from her pietists, the German contribution—one of the utmost value—was to come. Neither the philosophies of Germany, nor the social theories of France help in the recovery of the Fatherhood and Family of God. For such help we must return to England and the Great Revival.

(4) *The Religious Revolution*. Wesley was no rebel, but his work was revolutionary. 'I am certain', said one of our keenest critics, 'that nobody has studied Wesley as he ought to be studied, and the Methodist biographies are as blind and dense as possible.'<sup>10</sup> The essential truth of this judgement is being proved; for the greatest words about Wesley are now being written not by Methodist writers but by our living national historians. Sir G. M. Trevelyan's *English Social History* contains more than twenty references to the Revival. Lord Elton says of the new Commonwealth that followed the loss of America: 'Its fountain head was doubtless the religious revival of Wesley.'<sup>11</sup> Trevelyan's references, dealing with the social life of England, remind us of Wesley's phrase, 'to spread Scriptural holiness throughout the land'; Lord Elton, writing of the new Empire, recalls the famous sentence: '*The World is my parish*.' In both spheres Wesley's work was effective.

Wesley has been under-estimated and under-written. It has been easy; the process is simple. He has been called an evangelist; and evangelists are a mixed crowd. We have had many evangelists not at all like him; we have had none quite like him. Wesley was much more than an evangelist. To quote Robertson Nicoll once more: 'The strange thing to me about Wesley is his apostolic aloofness. He was interested in everything and yet quite detached. . . . To combine detachment with love seems almost an impossible task, and yet Wesley accomplished it.'<sup>12</sup> The following letter from Dr Johnson to Wesley confirms this insight.<sup>13</sup>

Feb. 6, 1776

SIR,

When I received your *Commentary on the Bible*, I durst not at first flatter myself that I was to keep it, having so little claim to so valuable a present; and when Mrs Hall informed me of your kindness, was hindered from time to time from returning you those thanks which I now entreat you to accept.

I have thanks likewise to return for the addition of your important suffrage to my argument on the American question. To have gained such a mind as yours may justly confirm me in my own opinion. What effect my paper has had on the publick I know not, but I have now no reason to be discouraged. The lecturer was surely in the right, who, though he saw his audience slinking away, refused to quit the chair while Plato stayed.

I am,

Reverend Sir,

Your most humble servant,

SAM JOHNSON.

What a compliment—from Dr Johnson, one not profuse in compliments! There

<sup>10</sup> Sir William Robertson Nicoll in a letter to Dr Denny, quoted in *Biography of Sir William Robertson Nicoll*, by T. H. Darlow, p. 348. <sup>11</sup> *The Imperial Commonwealth*.

<sup>12</sup> T. H. Darlow, op. cit. p. 348.

<sup>13</sup> *John Wesley's Place in Church History*, R. D. Urlin,

p. 130.



was obviously a mind known to Dr Johnson that was not and could not be known to the unlettered crowds who hung upon his simple but burning words. His natural interest was science; his absorbing vocation was evangelism.

Wesley was a born scientist. His admiration for Aristotle and Bacon was immense. Repeatedly he places them in a category apart as examples of 'universal genius'.<sup>24</sup> But little as Bacon, and less than Aristotle, did he understand Plato. Son of the Scientific Age, he rejoiced in work of the British Association and kindred bodies.<sup>25</sup> In this respect he was nearer to Bacon than either Locke or Butler, being more of a scientist, though less of a philosopher than either.

He compiled a *Compendium of Natural Philosophy* (Science today) to which he wrote both Introduction and Conclusion. His reading was wide<sup>26</sup> and his judgments in this sphere proved remarkably sound. He is now recognized as having been a pioneer in Electrotherapy and his book on the subject was the second to be published.<sup>27</sup> True, he thought, not being a philosopher, that the 'Method of Experiment could not be applied to religious experience'; but fortunately, that is exactly what he did after his conversion. And that, as Dr Streeter points out in his *Reality*,<sup>28</sup> is just where the scientific method should be brought to bear on religion. After all, we cannot very well apply the Method of Experiment to that of which we have no experience! Wesley applied the scientific method to the sphere that he made his own—the spiritual life.

To these qualities of mind must be added a self-discipline seldom equalled and never excelled in the whole of Christian history. How came this very logical, precise, practical Englishman to a mystical experience of God in Christ? One authority on Wesley, in a letter to the present writer says: 'He appears to have been of the "once-born" or unconvertible type.' After prolonged self-effort and search, by the Everlasting Mercy he *was* brought to such an experience at the age of thirty-five. It came to him as 'a *strange* warming of the heart'. It is significant that he calls it 'strange'—something unexpected—as if God took him by surprise; like Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus.

We now come to where the German tributary joins the main stream of our story. The account of Wesley's meeting with the Moravian missionaries, of his talks with Peter Bohler, and of the famous meeting in Aldersgate Street are too well known to be re-told here. It is enough to say that Wesley was transformed through contact with German mysticism. But Wesley, with his heart now 'strangely warmed', remains the incorrigible Englishman. The German methods of Count Zinzendorff, and the extreme mysticism of Boehme are not for him. Instead, this practical, experimental, adventurous Englishman sets out on his great enterprise. The two strains now fused in his strong personality combine to make him the greatest evangelist of modern times. He brings the New Testament to his 'world parish' of human need. His trained and truly scientific mind is at work, from the first. We find him in Herrnhut, examining with meticulous care, scores of witnesses to the new life in Christ.<sup>29</sup> Later, in London alone, he questions over six hundred persons, making careful notes, and checking

<sup>24</sup> *Works*, IV. 404.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*, XIII.443.

<sup>26</sup> The Rev. Frank Baker, *London Quarterly Review* (July 1943), mentions a list of 1,000 authors and an average of two volumes per author.

<sup>27</sup> *John Wesley, Physician and Electrotherapist*, Dr W. J. Turrell (Blackwell, Oxford 1938).

<sup>28</sup> p. 110.

<sup>29</sup> *Works*, I.114ff.

his findings by the New Testament. This method he never forsakes. As with persons, so with systems. The parochial system must give way, before a proved experiment, to meet a living need. Field-preaching must be undertaken, however reluctantly; lay-preachers and class-leaders must be appointed, if need demanded, and experiment vindicated. Finally, even ordinations must be undertaken, if Bishops obstinately refuse to provide an ordained ministry for an awakening continent.

What was the essential message that, rooted in his personal experience, combined with his personal gifts, made him 'the apostle of the Atlantic Seaboard', as in the first century St Paul was the Apostle of the Mediterranean seaboard? It permeates his writings, but is nowhere more clearly expressed than in *The Character of a Methodist*.<sup>30</sup> He never tires of telling the world: 'We preach no new doctrine.' Instead, he rediscovered and restored a *way of life* that had been lost. For he *did* things that in his day were 'not done', but which, he was quite sure, had been done in the first century, and must be done again by all who would be real Christians.

The marks of the real Christian are clearly set out, and chiefly that he 'is no longer a servant, but a son'. And it follows:

(1) 'Because he is a son, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into his heart, crying, "Abba, Father".'

(2) 'The Spirit beareth witness with his spirit that he is a child of God.'

(3) 'His heart is filled with love to all mankind, to every child of "the Father of the Spirits of all flesh".'<sup>31</sup>

Out of this rediscovery there grew up a body of experimental and practical divinity, mostly expressed in sermon and song, everywhere implying the universal Fatherhood and Family of God.

John Wesley wrote far fewer hymns than his brother, but one must be quoted:

*Father of all,*<sup>32</sup> whose powerful voice  
Called forth *this universal frame*.<sup>33</sup>

Here Wesley combines the words of St Paul with a phrase of Francis Bacon, while with Irenaeus he finds the *source of creation in the Fatherhood of God*.

Neither Luther nor Augustine could have used such words. Wesley goes back beyond both to the Greek Fathers and, above all, to the New Testament.

This was the deep source of that 'fountain head' from which the life of the English-speaking world was renewed. All the Churches were awakened.

The Methodists themselves remained strictly, even narrowly, religious. Evangelism had been their training; it became their vocation. They produced, at first, no political leadership. That was provided by the Evangelicals, and was 'not confined to any sect or political party'.<sup>34</sup> The names of Wilberforce and Shaftesbury are outstanding. Each had a vision that transcended party ties. It is fitting to remind ourselves, at such a time as this, that no man of any party has ever achieved greater 'redress of grievances' for their over-burdened fellow men than these two inspired solely by the love of Christ.

The Methodists were no less lacking in philosophic thinkers.<sup>35</sup> So the inter-

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*, VII.340.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Ephesians 4.

<sup>33</sup> Bacon, *Essay on Atheism*.

<sup>34</sup> Trevelyan, *English Social History*, p. 495.

<sup>35</sup> Scott Lidgett, *The Fatherhood of God*, p. 270.

pretation waited, though the Revival was changing the mental as well as the moral climate of the country. Thinkers and poets like Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey, became conscious of it. Reacting from the negations of the French Revolution, they were now one with Burke at least in this: a nation is an *organici community* with a tradition and genius of its own. A 'national family' is emerging.

Wordsworth's poetry interpreted a benignant Nature to the reverent though inarticulate Englishman. Coleridge turned the postulates of Kant's *Practical Reason* into the positive intuitions of the human spirit. God became real. And a greater thinker than Coleridge was at hand in Frederick Denison Maurice.<sup>22</sup> Maurice brought to metaphysics an imaginative genius and insight similar to that which Newton brought to physics. He knew well that 'Philosophy cannot create its own material; that lies in the history of the present or of the past.' The *event* is the revelation. The Revival had provided great material. Living in its after-glow, he brought to it a deeper understanding and interpretation than any other.

We are slow to recognize our prophets; slower still to estimate them—especially if they are also philosophers. It is certain that Maurice (as Wesley) has been under-estimated and under-written. It is said to be the most deplorable lacuna in English theology that we still have no adequate study of Maurice's teaching. Without accepting the judgement of Archdeacon Hare, that 'no such mind as Maurice's has been given to the world since Plato', we may freely accept him as our greatest Platonic thinker. We search our history in vain for his peer.

So our greatest Platonist comes to the interpretation of our greatest Evangelist—an Aristotelian reborn. Maurice accepts Wesley's 'regenerate man' as 'the true man', against Butler's 'natural man' however moral.<sup>23</sup> Comparing the results of 'the great Methodist Movement . . . with those of the French Revolution', he says: 'The difference lay in this; that those preachers and class-leaders spoke to the people of the Infinite and Eternal—declared that a voice had come forth from God to the people.'<sup>24</sup>

With his vast philosophic learning, his deep spirituality, a mind of great intuitive power, he saw, as no one before him had seen, the *real foundation of human society in the Family of God*. This is no human conception, but a divine creation—in a Son, the divine Logos. It is not an ideal to be attained, it is a status to be accepted. It is a reality in God; it waits to be realized in man. It is no sentimental inference from feeble human fatherhood; the archetype of fatherhood is God, 'from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name and nature'.<sup>25</sup> It is no symbol; God is Father. Mankind is His Family. This is the ultimate social relationship, relative only to God. No barriers of race or language; of creed or confession; no religious experience can make it null or void. No person, or people, can alter this basis of human life. Though they refuse to live in peace together, they cannot get out of the Family; though they make war upon one another, they do it *within* the Family. All war is fratricidal. Disobedient sons are still sons.

Maurice above all men recovered for English theology the Fatherhood of God. Others have followed; notably Kingsley and R. H. Hutton; Hort and Westcott;

<sup>22</sup> J. S. Mill, *Autobiography*, p. 176.

<sup>23</sup> F. Denison Maurice, *Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy*, II.6.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*, II.466-8.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*, II.667.

<sup>26</sup> Ephesians, 3:11 (Moffatt).

Scott Holland and Gore; Scott Lidgett and Selbie; Raven and Temple. The Fatherhood of God is central and supreme. It is not at all likely again to be dislodged. But Maurice alone—within the knowledge of the present writer—has drawn from it a clearly articulated doctrine of the *Family*<sup>41</sup>—not mere abstractions of 'brotherhood' and 'community'. Such are only true in *thought* if the Family is real in *life*.

It may be asked—it *ought* to be asked—what happened to the Revival and to Methodism. The answer is in three words—the Industrial Revolution. The Revolution was no evil thing; it was potentially an instrument of good. The failure was in the human use of it. The life of the Church had been renewed, but even so it was unequal to the task of Christianizing the Revolution. It called for a wisdom, and a wealth of unselfish service that neither Church nor State possessed. The very qualities that had fitted men to serve an earlier age proved a positive handicap—individuality, enterprise, and excessive love of personal freedom. Tolpuddle martyrs, true; but how few they were! The cotton-bosses and mine-owners, whom Shaftesbury counted his bitterest opponents, were both more numerous and more powerful. And many of them claimed membership of the very Church that owned the martyrs!

And so the battle was joined that was to disfigure the social and economic life of the nation for more than a century. Peterloo and the hungry forties, the Chartist agitation, were but symptoms. We must look deeper for the diagnosis.

An English philosophy, at once alien to the Revival, and congenial to the Industrial Revolution, had survived from the eighteenth century. The individualism of the Lockian psychology, with its philosophy of sensation, had not been cured—it had only been checked, by its failures (for they *were* its failures) in the French Revolution, and the recoil of English minds. It found in the Industrial Revolution a large and convenient stepping-stone, over the intervening currents, into the Utilitarianism of Bentham, to be only modified by the rationalist Radicalism of John Stuart Mill.

Mill and Maurice met. They represent the two main currents of the century, and of English thought. They differed deeply, yet their regard was mutual and sincere. Mill, a supreme logician, was, on his own confession, totally lacking in intuition, and so in philosophic depth. He writes: 'Although my discussions with Maurice were almost always disputes, I carried away from them much that helped me to build up my new fabric of thought.' He 'counted Maurice decidedly superior to Coleridge in an intellectual point of view'.<sup>42</sup> Yet Mill failed to understand him. For reason we need look no farther than his judgement of the Fourth Gospel as 'poor stuff'. Maurice has been described as 'St John expounding St John'! Dr C. E. Raven, writing of Maurice, says: 'His critics, Froude and Jowett, Mill and Huxley, and Leslie Stephen . . . are returning to the dust; Maurice lives and grows.'<sup>43</sup> This is the twentieth century speaking through one of its alert thinkers.

The significance of Maurice is not historic; it is still prophetic.

But the nineteenth century, the matter-of-fact, practical Englishman (notably the Lancashire man) busy among his machinery and his physical discoveries, found the lucid logic and pat political economy of Mill more to his taste than the

<sup>41</sup> *Social Morality*—the whole book.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*, p. 176.

<sup>43</sup> *The History of Christian Socialism*, p. 80.

deeper and more demanding message of his greatest prophet. Maurice makes Marx superfluous; Mill made him inevitable.

They called Maurice 'the prophet of Christian Socialism'. He was truly a prophet, but he was no Socialist at all. He was just a great Christain, simply and deeply wise, to whom a group of ardent reformers (some of them Socialists) turned for counsel they trusted more than their own. But the *nation* did not listen, the Church did not listen; and so the civilization of the nineteenth century, despite the witness of Maurice, moved through the shallows of a *laissez faire* economy with little apparent danger, into the twentieth century, soon to strike unsuspected rocks. And the world is where it is today.

Maurice warned both 'Left' and 'Right' of their 'vicious premises' in each assuming that 'land, goods, money, labour' were the 'basis of society' . . . whereas *human relations* not only should, but *do* lie beneath all these'.<sup>44</sup>

Finally, Maurice's message to all who 'wait for the redemption of human society'; all who talk of world unity, of solidarity, community, brotherhood, and like abstractions: all these aspirations call for a Family. Such a Family there *is*, founded and revealed in a Son. Maurice accepted the historic Creeds; but he ever turned to the *Paternoster*. It was infinitely precious to him. It is now, most truly, called 'The Family Prayer'.

East and West met in Maurice. The East, starting from the Fatherhood, affirmed the Divine Son and gave us the Trinity (the Divine Family) but overlooked the human family. The West, beginning from 'the other end', with human nature and human need, comes through the Son and the Spirit of sonship to the Father, in whom alone the human family is one. 'One world' becomes one Family in Him.

TOM DRING

<sup>44</sup> *Life of F. D. Maurice*, II.114.

## LEONARDO DA VINCI—1452-1952

THE ART lover who has never set foot in Italy is vaguely familiar with the Tuscan landscape, since behind a thousand Madonnas and Crucifixions of the painters of the Quattrocento, it imparts the feeling of remote and almost infinite distance. For no longer does the stiff formalism of the Byzantine tradition, with its conventional background of golden ornament suffice. In its place there is a palpable evocation of the enchanting forms of that world in which they dwelt, which was more than a mere change in fashion. Rather was it the sign of a new awareness of the beauty of nature, the birth of a new humanism. In this less formal method they sought to communicate a new consciousness of the meaning of life, with its inward sorrows and consolations for which the more rigid manner of the earlier painters had been inadequate. So with this more personal relationship to nature, they saw it was more fitting that the stage upon which the incidents of our Lord's earthly life were placed should harmonize with the mind of Him who was a lover of flowers and birds.

You will hardly find a landscape more fitted to express this new tendency than the country lying around Florence. The steep hill-sides with their grey and silver olive-trees, the shadowy masses of tall cypresses etched against a luminous sky, with the delicate beauty of almond blossom veiling the hard lines of the houses



clustering about the campaniles of their beloved churches form an unforgettable scene of earthly beauty.

Into this landscape in 1452 Leonardo da Vinci was born. Vasari is silent about the circumstances of his birth, but the Anonima Gaddiano records that he was the love child of Ser Piero di Ser Michele da Vinci, and a girl of good blood who subsequently became the wife of a worthy citizen of Vinci. Ser Piero followed the traditional profession of his family—that of a notary—in which he attained some considerable eminence, but his contemporaries were most impressed by his astounding virility. He was married four times, and his youngest son was born some fifty-two years after the birth of Leonardo. But for twenty years Leonardo was his father's only child, and the shadow of illegitimacy quickly faded. He was received into his father's house before he was five years of age, and lacked nothing of parental care, whilst the ardent and strongly sensitive nature such children often possess quickly unfolded itself. He received the education proper to the son of a well-to-do citizen, in which elementary mathematics and accountancy played a large part, and from which the classics were almost completely absent. He was possessed of a remarkable physical beauty, a grace and dexterity of movement, which was united to a great physical strength. Vasari concludes that these were things bestowed by God and not acquired by human art. His manners were fascinating, and in music and song he expressed the awakening spirit of a new age, seeking freedom and adventure, buying birds and setting them free to wing their own ways about the orchard groves of Florence.

His mind was notable in its range and depth even in an age which was remarkable for its intellectual culture, but unfortunately it was not accompanied by any stability of purpose, so that his projects were seldom brought to completion. His nearest approach to constancy came in his love of drawing, and to the magic of line and sculpture he always returned. Of other wayward impulses he might tire, but painting and modelling remained until the end a consuming passion. So impressive were his early accomplishments that his father took some of his youthful drawings to Andrea Verrochio, whose studio was the centre of art in Florence, and with whom he was on terms of close friendship. He besought from the greatest sculptor of the day an expert and honest opinion on these drawings, so that he might decide whether to encourage him in the study of art. A glance at the drawings revealed to Andrea that here was the work of an exceptional genius, and at once counselled his father to give him every facility to prosecute his studies in art. The inevitable result was that he was apprenticed to Verrochio, and at the age of fourteen entered the studio and began his life-work, which Vasari tells us: 'He did with no little willingness.'

To any boy of genius Florence could not fail to be a city of charmed magic case-ments opening on to a new world of rich discovery in science, philosophy, and art. There were voices from the past, and Dante and Giotto, Boccaccio and Masaccio were not shadowy figures in a remote age, but were vividly present in the intellectual converse of its society, and could not fail to stimulate the creative activity of the youthful Leonardo. In the studio itself the perspective researches of Uccello, and the anatomical writings of the Pollaiuoli would form part of his regular curriculum, and in the new degree of reality in his sketches of the figure we can note the results of such study.

But Florence had more than this to contribute to the boy's development. For

despite all its political upheavals, its bewildering exchanges of freedoms and despotisms, and its tentative experiments in democracy, it was pre-eminently a society where individuality in its own distinctive shape and dress was not afraid of being accounted singular. It was a world of personality, in which the individual mattered and the scholar followed his lonely way in the pursuit of a wider culture and an encyclopedic knowledge. The specialist, with his narrow field of observation, was unknown, and the ideal was 'l'Uomo Universale', who took the world for his intellectual parish, and was unwilling to leave any avenue of knowledge unexplored.

Leonardo has left us in the Codex Atlanticus at Milan the names of some of the teachers with whom he studied. Not all were significant, but amongst them were three who had achieved a reputation far beyond Florence—Benedetto dell Abbaco, the mathematician; Argyropoulos, the most learned of that company of Greeks who had fled to Italy on the fall of Constantinople; and Toscanelli, who had achieved fame in mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and geography. He was the originator of the idea that Asia could be reached by a Western route, and had urged Columbus to make the attempt. But it is the almost legendary figure of Leon Battisti Alberti that would exercise the greatest influence upon Leonardo. He was renowned as an athlete, musician, architect, painter and sculptor, physicist and philosopher, astronomer and mathematician; a Christian apologist who taught that without Christianity the world would wander into a labyrinth of error. But the most significant aspect of his personality was his insight into nature, with its quickening of his emotional sensibility. He could be moved to tears at the sight of waving corn-fields and noble trees. A perfectly-formed animal was looked upon with reverence; and when taken ill, the sight of a beautiful landscape brought about his recovery. Such a character could not fail to have a profound influence upon Leonardo, and it is not an idle surmise that here was the spring from which he drank, so that all his subsequent endeavour, his passion for studying nature in its varied forms, his profound insight into the inner meaning of the common objects around him, can be traced to the influences that were so pervasive in the life of Florence at this time. His mind was scientific in its direction, if not in its method, so that he was always seeking for the underlying relationship, which can be detected between the various orders of plants and animals until he finds in the anatomical structure the links which bind together the world of nature and of man, and had perhaps some primeval connexion with the heavenly bodies upon whose movements he meditated so long and intensely.

It was because he was more scientist than artist in the bent of his mind that he could never remain content with the mere appreciation of natural beauty, which since Dante had become the heritage of cultivated minds. He was aware of the evanescent light, the intangible, haunting effect of shadows passing over a bare accentuated landscape, or the enigmatic query upon the face of a woman which betokened the depth of passion behind the features, but he desired more than this, and more than his contemporaries with their delight in the sensuous aspects of beauty could teach him. How great was that delight we know from the poets of the age—Petrarch has recorded for us the profound impression that the ascent of a mountain near Avignon made upon his mind, whilst Pius the Second would hold his court in the mountains, receiving his ambassadors under the shade of some gnarled olive tree, or near to the secret trysting place of Diana by Lake Nemi. Here

were passed days of perfect delight in the beauty of the world about him, a delight shared by his courtiers. But Leonardo sought for more than this sensuous ecstasy in the external manifestation of nature—an irrational discontent with the mere appearance of things was never quietened in his mind, so that it is the curious and bizarre forms in nature that move him most deeply, and of which he has left so many strange and mysterious drawings. The inscrutable and unfathomable expression of his women, and the grotesque character of so many of his men disclose the pre-occupation of his mind with the search for the unknowable.

*I would seek until I found  
Something I could never find,  
Something lying on the ground  
In the bottom of my mind.*

Crystallized in this perpetual restlessness of his mind is the contrast between the Renaissance and the civilization from which it took its rise. No longer were they content to find their inspiration in the examples of Greek sculpture upon the sarcophagi at Pisa and the newly-awakened enthusiasms of Niccolo and Giovanni Pisano were by now grown cold. In Leonardo it had been replaced by a mistrust of classical learning and in the new disposition of his mind we can see the significant point of departure in the Renaissance, which made it not simply a revival of learning but an epoch of new creative achievement. For Leonardo this was an inevitable movement, since it is with the future rather than the past that his mind is concerned, and he wears the mantle of the prophet rather than the dingy trappings of the antiquarian. His mind is for ever 'voyaging through strange seas of thought alone', seeking by unusual variations of colour and form to elicit some quality of immortality in the work of his hands. Of his unceasing industry, Vasari has left us in no doubt, and in a famous passage he has indicated something of his passionate absorption in art and science. 'And he practised not one branch of art alone, but all those of which drawing formed a part and having an intellect so divine and marvellous, and being an excellent geometrician, he worked not only in sculpture, executing, in his youth in clay, some heads of women that are smiling, of which casts in plaster are still taken, and likewise some heads of boys which possess all the appearance of having come from the hand of a master, but in architecture also, he made many drawings both of plans, as of other projections of buildings. . . and because he wished that painting should be his profession, he studied much in drawing from nature, and often in making models of figures in clay, and then set himself to draw them . . . and he executed them in black-and-white with the point of a brush . . . that no one has ever attained to such fineness of execution; and of such I have a head drawn with the style in chiaroscuro that is divine.'

By a strange irony, little of the work which he brought to the greatest degree of completeness, and upon which he lavished his utmost skill and thought, survives. Of the heads of smiling women modelled in terra-cotta none are known to exist, whilst many of the paintings described by Vasari as being the most remarkable have perished. His greatest painting, *The Last Supper*, commenced its swift deterioration even in his own lifetime, and before a hundred years had passed little of the original was visible. His other great composition, *The Battle of the Standard*, designed for the citizens of Florence, in an open competition, has disappeared

completely. It was to have been placed in the great council chamber and the subject was to be taken from some incident in the Florentine wars of the fifteenth century—now we know it only by some sketches and studies of horses and a copy made by Rubens of the central incident of what must have been one of the world's greatest works of art. It was a subject in which Leonardo's interest in the operations of war as an art, his superb knowledge of the anatomy of the horse, and his long study of the elements of dramatic composition, offered him the opportunity for a portrayal of the fury of war with an intensity of feeling that has never been equalled. But of its grim reality we have only conjectures and a few sketches. Here and there are other fragments—the kneeling angel in the Baptism of Verrochio, which decided the master never to touch colour again, as the pupil was so manifestly his superior in painting. There is an unfinished *Adoration of the Kings* before which Raphael stood speechless; *The Annunciation*, and two versions of *The Virgin of the Rocks*, of which the one in the National Gallery is mostly by another hand; *The Virgin and Child and St Anne*; three or four portraits; and the *Mona Lisa*, about which Pater has written one of the immortal passages of English prose.

So we must turn to the drawings if we are to understand how Leonardo has come to be regarded as the apotheosis of the spirit of the Renaissance. For these drawings are a more personal revelation of the man than his elaborate compositions. Here we can follow the impulses of his mind, the fascination that held his pencil to the paper. In some there is a refined delicacy of line and in others a rude, vigorous delineation of physical force, whilst some are overpowering in their dynamic realization of cosmic forces.

To this present age much of the interest in Leonardo lies in his anticipations by some four centuries of many of the developments of our modern world. He proposed the building of standardized houses and prefabricated methods of construction. 'Let the houses be changed and arranged in order, and this will easily be done when they are first made in parts on the open places and then the framework can be fitted together on the site where they are to be permanent.' He stipulates in one of his town plans that the width of the streets should equal the average height of the houses, which is one of the conditions of building made by the L.C.C. He proposed a dual system of roads, at different levels to take varying types of traffic. His famous letter to Lodovico at Milan sets out what he was able to do in the arts of war, both in attack and defence. Here are designs for armoured cars, the prototype of the modern tank, contrivances for the rapid mechanical discharge of arrows in quick succession, bridges which could be transported in parts and anticipated the modern Bailey bridge. He developed systems of irrigation by means of canals, and devised a system of dams and locks so that the levels of river waters could be raised or lowered. These were all matters of practical engineering, but in other directions he had a quality of intuition in which his conclusions seemed to be inspired guesses. Before Copernicus had revolutionized astronomical study, Leonardo had written in his note-books, 'The Sun does not move', whilst he had thought of sound as waves. But the one branch of scientific study which more than any other permanently occupied his mind was anatomy. Here he pushed his researches far beyond anything required by the practice of painting or of sculpture. He not only uncovered the structural layers of muscle, tendons and bones in the human figure, but developed the study of comparative anatomy. The similarities in physical structure between men and animals quickened that boundless curiosity into the

hidden origins of varying species, and awakened in his mind a deep sense of the unity of nature in its most diverse aspects.

What was the character of the man who after five centuries still appeals to us as the greatest figure of the Renaissance? Here was a complex nature, full of contradictions, manifesting certain abnormalities and defying any attempt to label and pigeon-hole it. Perhaps its most conspicuous element was the passionate desire for knowledge, the boundless curiosity which drove him to make experiment upon experiment, so that he might if possible exhaust the possibility of error. With this went a penetrating quality of insight, so that the meaning underlying the visible results of his experiments did not elude him. Yet he lacked the power to relate his experiments to general principles, and his mind was always concerned with the concrete and particular, and so his almost incredible labours never resulted in any great advance in knowledge. He relied upon experience and in defending himself against the criticisms of those accounted to be his superiors says: 'No considerato le mie cose essere nate sotto la senplice è mera sperientia, la quale è maestra vera'—and his notebooks are full of maxims upon the value of experience. Yet here he is inconsistent. He extols science without being scientific. 'Those who fall in love with practice without science are like a sailor who enters a ship without a helm or a compass, who can never be certain whither he is going.' 'Practice must always be founded upon sound theory.' Yet he never brought his observations into any kind of order, and was unable to make any scientific synthesis of his own researches, largely because he was more interested in the acquiring of knowledge than in its usefulness when acquired. Only in the *Trattato della Pittura* does he bring the immense knowledge of the practice of the arts into some sort of system, but it is a work so amazingly rich in its understanding of every problem that the artist must solve if he is to create a great work of art that it may be said of it that the parts are greater than the whole.

In his personal life, along with a supreme self-confidence in his own powers, there was also a great humility. He had a complete contempt for riches. 'He who possesses most must be most afraid of loss.' 'He who wishes to be rich in a day will be hanged in a year.' 'That is not riches which may be lost; virtue is our true good and the true reward of its possessor.'

This emphasis on virtue was constant throughout his life, and makes it difficult to accept the modern conclusion that he was guilty of abnormal sexual practices. The evidence will hardly bear examination, and rests in the first place upon the anonymous charges made to the *Officiali di Notte e Monasteri*, a body charged with the oversight of the morals of the community. The charges were twice heard and were twice dismissed as no evidence was forthcoming. In the second place it is assumed that the relationships between Leonardo and his young servant Giacomo Salai were more than those of master and valet. This is again pure conjecture, and from what we know of the character of Salai, such a relationship would be highly improbable. It is also in direct contradiction to the high moral precepts which occur throughout Leonardo's own writings. 'Who so curbs not lustful desires puts himself on a level with the beasts.' 'You can have no dominion greater or less than that over yourself.' 'It is easier to contend with evil at the first than at the last.' 'I obey Thee, Lord, for the love I ought in all reason to bear Thee.' 'Thou, O God, dost sell us all good things at the price of labour.'

Pater has said that the Renaissance of the fifteenth century was in many things



great rather by what it designed than by what it achieved—and of no one is this truer than of da Vinci. Yet there are some half-dozen paintings that will always remain as examples of the supreme power of the imagination in making visible and actual what had hitherto only existed in the strange and shadowy hauntings of half-forgotten dreams. And whenever men are seeking to express in ideal form those bewildering ideas which seem to take their origin in the unplumbed recesses of our being, Leonardo will remain not a remote and ghostly figure of the past, but a source of wisdom and guidance to us who in this complicated world must somehow find a pathway to reality.

ARTHUR B. BATEMAN

## *Overseas Missions*

### THE CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA AND 'THE END OF FOREIGN MISSIONS'

**I**N THE LONDON QUARTERLY AND HOLBORN REVIEW for October 1950 there appeared an article by the Rev. D. Howard Smith, entitled 'The End of Foreign Missions'. The purpose of the present article is to examine Mr Smith's arguments from the point of view of a part of the Mission Field where there is now an autonomous Church.

It needs first of all to be emphasized that the Church of South India is truly autonomous. This is clearly laid down in the Basis of Union, Section 13, and it has also been realized in fact. Thus a good deal of what is stated in Mr Smith's article about the relation of the Missionary Society to the Church overseas is, as far as the Church of South India is concerned, quite out of date.

But it also needs to be pointed out that most of it was out of date even before Church Union, as far as Methodism in South India was concerned. Although the Methodist Church in South India was the only one of the three Uniting Churches that was not fully autonomous before Union, in practice it was almost so. The General Synod of the Methodist Church, in India, Burma, and Ceylon, at its meeting in 1946, expressed 'its appreciation of the policy of the Missionary Society and the parent Methodist Conference, revealed in the large measure of responsibility they entrust to the Methodist Church in India and Ceylon, and in the initiative they have taken in measures for its more complete autonomy, whereby the District and Provincial Synods have virtually become the governing bodies of the Church'. Further proposals were made for the attainment of complete autonomy by the Methodist Church in India and Ceylon; but, as far as South India is concerned, they were rendered obsolete by the Inauguration of the Church of South India eighteen months later.

It is a proof that the Methodist Church in South India, at any rate, was indeed 'virtually' autonomous, that the step toward complete autonomy which was taken when Church Union was consummated proved a very easy one, and the necessary

adjustments were soon made, both by the Methodist Missionary Society and by Methodists in South India.

It may be objected that for two reasons the Church of South India is not, in practice, truly autonomous. The first reason is the presence in it of a number of missionaries from the West, some of them holding responsible positions in the Church. The second reason given is the financial dependence of the Church of South India on grants from Missionary Societies in Europe and America. It will be necessary to examine each of these in turn.

The Synod of the Church of South India, at its meeting in January this year, gave special attention to the problem of the development of Indian leadership, and the place of the missionary in the Church. No definite resolutions were passed by the Synod, but some suggestions made by the Moderator in his address, and the resolutions of three informal group-meetings, one of Indian Bishops and presbyters, one of Indian laymen, and one of missionaries, were sent down to the Dioceses for their consideration. The three groups emphasized different aspects of the problem, but there was no substantial disagreement between them. It was generally recognized that the main problem is that of the development of Indian leadership, and it was nowhere suggested that the missionary has to be driven out from positions of authority. Where he occupies such a position, it is because the Church, and not the Missionary Society, has appointed him to it; and when a suitable national is available for the appointment, there will be no difficulty in appointing the latter. Some consideration was given to the problem of what work missionaries could do when they were no longer required to fill positions of administrative responsibility; and although this was not considered in detail, there was not much doubt that there will still be plenty of work which missionaries can do, in pastoral and evangelistic work, especially amongst young people and in those jobs where personal contact is important. From my knowledge of my fellow missionaries, I am quite sure that the great majority of them would much prefer to be doing such work, instead of spending a large part of their time on administration.

I think that it needs to be added that the process of devolution, or the development of Indian leadership, has gone much farther in South India than most Methodists in England realize. At least two-thirds, if not more, of the responsible positions in the Synod and in the Dioceses are held by Indians.

On page 315 Mr Smith argues that a missionary is always under the 'control' of his Missionary Society, and therefore can never become fully and completely a sharer in the life of the indigenous Church. I have never known any missionary in South India who felt that the claims upon him of the Missionary Society and of the Indian Church were in any way conflicting. It is said that the Missionary Society 'expected from him satisfactory reports of his work'. It is true that the M.M.S. is always glad to receive reports of the work (not any particular missionary's work, as those who read these reports will realize), but not with a view to sitting in judgement upon the missionary and directing his work, but rather in order to arouse interest in the Church at home through the spreading of knowledge about the Church overseas. And what is meant by 'satisfactory' reports? Some of the reports that we send home are encouraging, and some are disappointing; but they are the reports of God's work, not ours. Does the Missionary Society sit in judgement upon the work of God?

The Missionary Society has for many years exercised its authority over the

missionaries it has sent out, through the District and Provincial Synods, and it has almost always accepted their recommendations. When they gave place to the completely autonomous Diocesan Councils and the Synod of the Church of South India, the difference in the relation of the Missionary Society to the Church in India was due far more to the fact of Church Union than to the fact of autonomy.

The second objection that may be made to the assertion that the Church of South India is autonomous is that it still needs considerable financial assistance from the West. This is admittedly a problem, but only from the point of view of the Indian Church and not from that of the Missionary Society. The present policy of the M.M.S. completely disproves the old adage that he who pays the piper calls the tune. It is only when we need to ask for any special grant that we have to explain to the Missionary Society what we propose to do with the money, and the reason for that is simply that the amounts of grants requested from all the overseas fields exceed the amount of money available. As far as the regular block grants are concerned, we inform the Missionary Society in a general way how the money is spent, not because we have to seek their approval, but because those who give their offerings for the service of the Kingdom have a spiritual right to know how that money is being spent.

But the Church of South India does recognize that this dependence on financial assistance from abroad is a problem for itself. The present writer, in a paper prepared for the Methodist General Synod in 1946, argued that this dependence has two main causes: (1) the time required by the Younger Churches for growing spiritually toward full self-support, and (2) the extreme poverty of large sections of the Church in India, especially in community movement areas such as those in Hyderabad and Trichinopoly. In so far as our financial dependence on the West is due to the first of these two causes, the autonomy of the Indian Church is limited, but it is a limitation that arises from within, and not one that has been imposed from without. And the removal of this limitation will come by spiritual growth within the Church, and not by a deliberate policy of reduction of grants decided by the Missionary Society. (I say 'deliberate', because experience does show that where, through no fault of our own, our resources are quite inadequate for our needs, it often happens that the Holy Spirit works in quite unexpected ways. But it would be tempting God to reduce our financial resources deliberately in the hope that He will reveal to us other ways by which His work can be done.)

But it does need to be emphasized that there is also another cause for the financial dependence of the Indian Church, and that is the extreme poverty of so many of our people. In the Trichinopoly Diocese I estimate that this is responsible for the necessity of at least two-thirds of the grants that we receive from the Missionary Society. It is often argued that the answer to this problem is that we should adapt our organization to the economic capacity of the Church, and that the Missionary Societies have left the Younger Churches a legacy of white elephants in the form of expensive institutions. This problem is not nearly so simple as it sounds. It is not usually, as is so often supposed, large institutions which are most dependent on grants from abroad. Many High Schools are now almost self-supporting, and the contribution of such institutions to the economic development of the Indian Church is incalculable. In the Trichinopoly Diocese (about which alone I can speak with first-hand knowledge) the greater part of our grants from the Missionary Society is required for the pastoral work in the rural area where our Christians are living in

nearly 800 villages. One obvious solution is that we need to have more voluntary workers, but this is not easy in an area of such poverty that almost all people of education, apart from our paid workers, leave the villages for the towns, where alone they can get a living wage. Of course, there is work that even illiterate people, like many of our village elders, can do; but as one of our chief enemies is ignorance, there is much of the work that cannot be done except by men and women of a certain standard of education. There is a great difference between Christianity and Hinduism in this respect.

There is not space in this article to enter into a full discussion of this problem. But it does need to be said very clearly that the problem will have to be solved by the Indian Church, and not by the Missionary Society. It is a matter for the former to decide, for example, whether 'institutions of which there is no reasonable hope of their ever becoming supported entirely by the Church and people of the area should be ruthlessly scrapped'. If we are to help the Younger Churches to develop the autonomy which is already theirs or which we feel should be theirs, we should leave important decisions to them, and not try to decide their policy for them.

But so far as the question of autonomy is concerned, the main conclusion is that, in so far as the financial dependence on the West is due to the extreme poverty of large sections of the Church, it does not constitute a limitation on the autonomy of the Church. The really urgent problem is rather due to the possibility that what has happened in China may before very long happen in other parts of Asia also. But this problem is quite distinct from that of autonomy.

In Mr Smith's article some consideration is given to the question what will be required of missionaries working in Churches that are becoming more and more independent. This is another question that will have to be decided by the Younger Churches themselves and not by the Missionary Societies or by the Church in the West. So far the Church of South India has not given any very definite answer to this question; but one or two things may be suggested by those who are in touch with the trends of thought within that Church. It does seem as if missionaries will be needed more for work in rural areas than in the towns. And this in effect knocks out the suggestion that the missionary of the future should earn his own living and not be financially dependent on the Missionary Society, for what has been written above about voluntary workers in the villages applies *a fortiori* to missionaries. Moreover, the fact that missionaries receive their salary from the West has nothing to do with the financial dependence of the Younger Churches on those in Europe and America. As far as the salaries and allowances of missionaries are concerned, the contribution of the Missionary Society to the Indian Church is in terms of men and women, and not of money.

There will be a place for sincere Christians from our Churches at home who come out to earn their livings professionally or on business in India. They will be able to give a real witness in the application of Christian principles in business or professional life. They will also be able to make a valuable contribution as members of the Church of South India. But they can never take the place of missionaries and do the work that the latter are doing. They can never be as closely integrated into the life of the Church, in town and village (and the greater part of the Indian Church is in the latter), as the missionary who gives his or her whole time to the service of the Church. In fact, as far as I can see at present (and this is only a personal opinion), the Church of South India is likely to require missionaries, not so much

because they hold certain professional qualifications, as because, whatever their qualifications are, they are able to adapt themselves readily to situations for which they can have no direct training before they leave England. Above all, the Church will want to have missionaries who, by personal contact with people, and especially with young people, can lead them to the feet of Christ.

E. B. THORP

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## Notes and Discussions

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### THE RELIGIOUS CONCEPT IN MODERN EDUCATION

#### Its Meaning and Value

TO THOSE who are in any way interested in education it is quite obvious that modern education is something quite different from that of earlier periods. To the mind of the average tax-payer there is, or should be, the question whether or no the money spent upon education today is producing the results one would desire. In this respect it is interesting to note the remarks one hears expressed from time to time. Recently I overheard two elderly ladies talking, the burden of their conversation the money spent upon education. In their view there was little or no return for the outlay, in fact they felt that the only achievement was the production of young people completely devoid of manners. This view is being expressed in many quarters at the present time.

It is necessary therefore to examine the position: to compare the education given at the present time with that of earlier periods. The first thing to note is that religion does not have the meaning in modern education that it once had, and in view of this fact it is not out of place to ask whether or no the criticisms made are in any way connected with this absence of religious conception.

Education without a purpose is meaningless, and it must also be appreciated that education is not an end in itself, but a means to the fuller life. This implies that in actual practice the purpose of life cannot be divorced from the educational process. It implies the necessity for a concept: notion, belief, or thought. John Dewey has said: "The ultimate objects of knowledge are guided processes of change."<sup>1</sup>

John Donne in the seventeenth century put the matter rather differently. In a poem written to Mr Tilman after he had taken Holy Orders, he says:

*Thou art the same materials, as before,  
Onely the stampe is changed; but no more.  
As new crowned Kings alter the face  
But not the monies substance; so hath grace  
Chang'd onely Gods old image by Creation,  
To Christs new stampe, at this thy Coronation.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> *The Plain View* (The Ethical Union), January 1948. Vol. II, No. 4, page 46.

<sup>2</sup> *Donne* (Nonesuch Press), page 304.



We may assume that the person to whom the poem was addressed had at last reached his true purpose in life: that of the ministry of Christ's Church. We may also speculate upon the various forces which had been at work directing him toward the chosen end.

When we observe many of the young people who leave our schools and universities today, we are appalled by the fact that at the end of their educational process they are apparently no nearer a purpose in life than when they commenced.

The child who enters school at the age of five or even earlier is plastic material, and throughout the whole of the period devoted to organized education there will be a process of change: it is essential that that process is one of development.

It is quite obvious that the very young child will have little knowledge of a concept, although we may assume that even the youngest child, if there is a wholesome atmosphere in the home, will unconsciously have absorbed something of that atmosphere. In other words, the infant will commence the period of compulsory education with an idea, unconsciously held.

When we come to compare the education of today with that of early generations, we are forced to the view that large numbers of young children commence their education without any kind of idea or background.

Observation over many years inclines one to the view that the idea once planted is never forgotten or completely lost. Whatever changes may be effected by means of the educational process, the foundation remains, and tends to colour the whole of life.

Where the child commences its education without such an idea or background, it becomes almost entirely dependent upon a succession of teachers. Naturally, the type of school will play a great part. In the case of a Church school, there will obviously be an atmosphere not to be found in the municipal school. The child therefore lacking the background, and attending a Church school, may, quite early in life, find in the school what the home has failed to provide. When the child who comes from the home where the background is lacking, and goes to a municipal school, there is perhaps little chance of it being brought into touch with the vital atmosphere.

Nevertheless, the institutions themselves lack entirely any kind of religious atmosphere, and the student who comes to them without any kind of religious concept will seldom find it while there, but may leave the more materialistically minded. The problem then with which we are faced is one which covers the whole span of educational experience, and affects the lives of the greater part of those who in some way or another are moulded by the educational system.

Aldous Huxley tells us:

As the individual grows up, his knowledge becomes more conceptual and systematic in form, and its factual, utilitarian content is enormously increased.<sup>2</sup>

The child and the young person is worked upon by the educational system, and almost unconsciously they absorb from the atmosphere in which they find themselves: buildings, environment, teachers all play a part in the process of development; the importance of a wise and balanced relationship is obvious.

The pertinent question is, does the educational system as such provide any kind

<sup>2</sup> *Perennial Philosophy*, pp. 1-2.

of idea for a child, who when it comes in touch with the system lacks entirely any kind of background, or an idea of the meaning and purpose of life.

The measure of the importance of this question may be gauged from the fact that it concerns by far the greater number of children who enter school under modern conditions.

Even the fact that religious instruction now figures in the curriculum of every school does not answer the question. For while any teacher may possess the qualifications to impart religious instruction, whether or no that teaching is effective will depend almost entirely upon the teacher; in other words, whether it has for the teacher a meaning other than knowledge.

So far we have directed our thinking to one end of the scale: the young child. We must also think of the other end, the young person, who is fortunate enough to pass through a university. In the case of the older universities, by reason of their religious foundation, the position is fortunate, but in the case of the provincial universities the position is quite different. It is true that even in these institutions there are to be found keen students who undoubtedly exert a considerable influence for good among their fellows.

As Huxley points out, knowledge becomes increasingly conceptual as the years pass. In fact, it is a matter of conjecture whether or no after a certain period of time, or having reached a certain age, it is possible to redirect one's efforts in the field of education without some drastic adjustment: a change which we refer to as conversion, or right-about-face. This is a matter which introduces the psychological element which we cannot go into in this study. The fact of its existence must not, however, be overlooked or ignored.

We have found so far that either an idea must be implanted by the atmosphere, or through early association with a suitable environment in school. Failing this, unless there is some fundamental change effected later in the educational experience students will pass out into life bereft of any conception that they can get out of life only in accordance to what they are prepared to put in.

In other words, the students who thus pass out into the greater world of men, while educated in a modern sense, will lack the most vital qualification for a full life, namely a preparation to make their true contribution, due to the absence of a religious conception.

Without in any way seeking to give undue colour to one's own belief, it is still true that the person who does possess some kind of religious concept is an individual whose personality is enhanced, and who brings to life a meaning and purpose.

The value of education cannot be separated from the religious concept. Today we live in a world which presents a scientific paradox. Science in a variety of ways has helped the peoples of the world to come closer to each other, and yet by these very means has brought new problems that await solution. Into this new-found unity of reality has come a new force of disintegration. The process of division is becoming acute, because while it has always been present beneath the surface, modern methods of living serve to bring it into prominence. The absence of a religious concept removes at once a potent power of restraint. Today education is more concerned with bringing out the latent capabilities of the pupil, and while we should seek always to achieve the greatest mental and physical development of the growing child, it must be remembered that unless there is also the development of the spiritual side, the whole life will be unbalanced. Thus we find the canker of

modern society—lack of balance—which inevitably means ill-health. The primary value of the religious concept in education is, therefore, that it provides balance, and the society with this as its educational ideal is sound because it is composed of citizens who have built upon a solid foundation and who in consequence find in life a true purpose, and who by reason of their education are fully equipped to carry that society to new heights of achievement.

F. H. ANGOLD

### A NEW CHRISTOLOGY?<sup>1</sup>

LIKE Dean Matthews in *The Problem of Christ in the Twentieth Century*, Dr E. L. Allen has made an attempt to interpret the meaning of Christ in modern terms, but he is less bound to tradition than the Dean, and his statement is less satisfying.

He begins with a lucid account of the relation of God and Man in the Old Testament. His emphasis is on the *dynamic* categories of Hebrew thought, and this is applied to the nature of God, creation, man, sin, and redemption. Man, who is not to be understood in terms of essence but of relation, comes into being as he responds to God. This prepares the way for the chapters on the Work and the Person of Christ. The supreme task of Jesus was to bring God's forgiveness to sinners in such a way that they would realize that God is holy and that their sins are truly forgiven. The self-giving of Jesus on the Cross is that of a man like ourselves but 'this is the vehicle, the expression, the means, of self-giving on the part of God Himself'. With all this we agree, but when the author goes on to discredit the Ransom passage and to interpret the Last Supper as an invitation by Jesus to the disciples to go to death with Him, and to say 'He accepted death as a martyr and offered His life as a prayer that what He dreaded so much for His people might yet be spared them', one misses the note which Vincent Taylor so clearly sounded, namely, that Jesus understood the Cross to be rooted in the divine providence, and one wonders where this type of outlook is likely to lead. One's fears are confirmed in the chapter on the Person of Christ. Few will disagree with the observation that the category of 'substance' is not easily intelligible today, or with the statement that the Chalcedonian formula does not offer a solution, but a problem. Most would agree that the category of 'personality' *ought* to be more adequate, but as far as we are aware it has never been presented in such a way as to safeguard the truth for which the Nicene statement stands. It is true that the will of God is expressed in Christ, that the will of Christ and the will of God are one, but this does not necessarily express the whole truth about the relation of Christ to God. The uniqueness of Jesus rests on the fact that He always did that which was well-pleasing to God, whereas Jeremiah, for example, sometimes turned away; but the question still remains, Why

<sup>1</sup> *Divine and Human*, by E. L. Allen (The Epworth Press, 6s.).

did Jesus always thus act? Dr Allen says: 'God was seeking a man through whom to act in the world, a man was seeking a God for whom he could act—and the two met!' And again: 'The strong, wise, patient, love of God, waiting age by age to be gracious, was able through His dedication at last to come to us as it had always wanted to come.' Dr Allen suggests that instead of the old formula 'two natures in one person,' we should speak of 'two aspects of one situation'. The two aspects are the divine aspect, what God saw and did in these events, and the human aspect, what Jesus saw and did.

As far as we can see, this is pure adoptionism, and we are not surprised when Dr Allen admits the possibility that other Christs may appear. It is clear, as he admits, that his interest is Antiochian rather than Alexandrian. One misses most of all the acknowledgement both of the once-for-all-ness of what Christ has done, and also of the fact that, while he is 'Very man of very man', He is no less truly 'Very God of very God'. While much of what Dr Allen so well says is true, we are persuaded it is not the whole truth.

The author asks the question whether his approach is likely to lay such hold on people as the traditional view has done. In his hands it might do so with some, and perhaps with a good many, but we are convinced that it would never *sustain* a great company of Christians as the doctrine expressed in the lines 'Our God contracted to a span, Incomprehensibly made man' has done.

It is surprising that no mention is made of D. M. Baillie's great book on this theme, especially as the two approaches have so much in common. The most evident influence is that of Rudolf Bultmann, whose interest in ridding Christianity of so-called 'myth' is shared in Dr Allen's treatment, not only of the Virgin Birth and the Empty Tomb, but also of the Holy Trinity, as well as the Person and work of Christ.

PERCY SCOTT

## *Recent Literature*

*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Kings*, by James A. Montgomery, edited by Henry Snyder Gehman. (International Critical Commentary. T. & T. Clark, 35s.)

The appearance of this long-awaited commentary is a major event in Old Testament scholarship. Publication had to be postponed twice, and in the closing months of his life the author had to entrust his former student, Professor Gehman, with the responsibility of seeing the volume through the Press. It is both a fitting monument to the immense erudition and sober judgement of the commentator, and an eloquent testimony to the steady progress which is being made in the various branches of Old Testament study. Particular attention is given to textual criticism and philology, with their complex and subtle problems. The introduction provides a terse and well-documented presentation of the materials, and throughout the commentary the handling of the evidence is eminently

judicious. The writer frankly avows his sympathy with the contentions of Nyberg, whom he often cites. Full use is also made of the new linguistic knowledge—e.g., in the Ras Shamra discoveries. The gains of archaeological research are also skilfully used in lighting up the background of ancient Hebrew social and political life. Here Professor Montgomery draws freely upon such American writers as Albright and Glueck. In considering some recent suggestions about Hebrew religion in the age of the monarchy, Montgomery is cautious. He fights shy of some at least of the implications of F. J. Hollis's argument about the sun cult at the Jerusalem Temple, and he is a critic of Eissfeldt's theory concerning the meaning of the term *molekh*. It is significant, too, that he says that the 'unique (sacerdotal) position of the King is not to be ascribed to foreign ideas; rather it was the genuine development of the natural priesthood of the father of the family, its representative before Deity'. There are also illuminating observations on the character of Hebrew historiography. It is unfortunate, however, that Noth's *Ueberlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, which appears in the bibliography, presumably became available too late to be seriously discussed. While a careful reader will note a number of minor slips, on the whole the material is accurately presented. This superb volume is unquestionably one of the finest commentaries ever produced on any book of the Old Testament.

G. W. ANDERSON

*Isaiah 40-55* (The Torch Bible Commentaries) by Christopher R. North. (S.C.M. 8s. 6d.)

This volume in the Torch series has been entrusted to Professor C. R. North. All who know his standard work, *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah*, expected this commentary to be good, but few could have expected him to achieve so much within the limits imposed. Seldom is an exegetical point missed, and very often attention is drawn to important critical or textual matters which many a more pretentious volume would pass over. While the Authorized Version is quoted, as in the rest of the series, constant reference to other Versions or to the Dead Sea MS. reveals that it is the Hebrew text which is being expounded, and that with authority. The wayfaring man, however, will most value this little book for its constant freshness, and will welcome, for example, the reference to Mr Hoyle on Chapter 40, and the illustrative material drawn from the poets. The reader is frequently directed to illuminating parallels elsewhere in the Bible, and learns to read his Bible with one eye on his hymn-book. The critical positions, as already expressed in Professor North's larger work, are not allowed to obtrude on the lively and provocative exposition of the text itself. The Introduction is necessarily very compressed and possibly a little too much so for the previously uninstructed, but in general the whole book is to be very highly commended for the minister and layman alike. None will fail to gain new insights into the 'Isaian Gospel'. This little book is another indication that Professor North is better equipped than perhaps any other British scholar to write the full-length, critical commentary on the Hebrew Text of Isaiah which the English language so sadly lacks.

S. B. FROST

*The Acts of the Apostles: the Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary*, by F. F. Bruce. (The Tyndale Press, 25s.)

Mr F. F. Bruce's excellent commentary on the Acts, to which he has given ten years, admirably supplies a long-felt need for a volume 'neither too technical nor too popular for the requirements of ordinary students'. All the usual subjects are treated competently under 'Introduction', though one could have wished for a fuller treatment of the historical problems and the question of the miraculous. A quotation will indicate Mr Bruce's position relative to the latter—'Christians who accept the crowning wonders of the Incarnation and Resurrection cannot logically deny the *possibility* of their being accom-



panied by lesser "signs", especially if these are supported by strong evidence'. Mr Bruce believes that the author was Luke the Physician, and that the Acts was probably written toward the end of Paul's two years of detention at Rome. He rejects the argument that Luke was dependent upon Josephus, and strongly maintains the historical value of the speeches, holding that they give 'at least the gist of what was said on the various occasions'. The commentary itself is painstaking to a degree. Mr Bruce rightly includes a good many elementary grammatical notes for the sake of beginners. He makes free use of Classical Greek, of the *Koiné*, of the Septuagint, and of the early Semitic sources used by Luke. Altogether this is a notable commentary, and, it may be added, a book that is accurately and beautifully printed.

VINCENT TAYLOR

*La Vie en Christ*, by Théo Preiss. (Delachaux & Niestlé, Neuchâtel, frs. suisses 7.80.)  
*Maris et femmes d'après saint Paul*, by J. J. von Allmen. (Delachaux et Niestlé, frs. suisses 3.90.)

It is a pleasure for an old student of the Protestant faculty of theology of Montpellier to see this tribute to the memory of Théo Preiss. For the ordinary reader, however, *Life in Christ* will have a limited interest, as it is a collection of essays by Théo Preiss of differing dates and value. The longest essay is on 'The Mysticism of the Imitation of Christ in St Ignatius of Antioch'. Then follow biblical subjects: 'Justification' in Johannine thought, social ethics in Philemon, the mystery of the Son of Man, and discussions of the hardy problems of the Last Supper and the paschal meal, and of infant baptism in the New Testament. A closing section of practical theology deals with the missionary task of the Church in the nation.

Much smaller, but of more general appeal, is *Husbands and Wives according to St Paul*. Dr von Allmen of Lucerne gives a wide-reaching, but not always profound, survey of St Paul's teaching on marriage and its problems for Christian living. In biblical anthropology, he says, sex is a constituent part of human nature, for we can *have* blue eyes, but we can only *be* male or female. Toward the end of the book it is suggested that, while there are no marriages in heaven, one may still be man or woman; and that this may be one reason for the dislike of re-marriage in the later New Testament. St Paul, contrary to the opinion of some Protestant theologians, is a great defender of marriage, for he compares it to the union of Christ and the Church. Christian union is indissoluble; adultery may corrupt but cannot break it. The author seems to assume too easily that monogamy is plainly taught in the New Testament, for it might be argued that the example of the early Church is far from clear (or is this missionary prejudice?). The central chapter deals with the theological significance of marriage, 'the typological import of the pair', and two closing chapters consider procreation, the family, motherhood, the Christian couple in the world, and the 'sacramental' witness of the Christian pair. This is a valuable little book.

GEOFFREY PARKINDER

*The Story of Christianity*, by John Armour. (Williams & Norgate, 25s.)

This attempt to write a one-volume history of Christianity opens with a clear but brief account of the history of the civilized world in the years B.C.—Egypt, Babylon, Palestine, Greece, Rome. This is followed by a chapter on the life and teaching of Jesus (treated, unfortunately, in a naïve and uncritical fashion, with some definite misstatements), and two on the story in the Acts of the Apostles. Then there are passed in rapid survey the developments in the second-century Church, the age of Roman persecution, the credal and other controversies, the evangelization of Europe, the struggle between Islam and Christianity, conditions in the Middle Ages, and the influences which contributed to the Reformation and counter-Reformation. Thereafter the narrative is concerned mainly with Britain. The beginnings of the Free Churches are dealt with, and there is a chapter on the Methodist Revival and its results. The modern missionary movements are sum-

marized and the concluding chapters are on present-day tendencies in theology, social movements, and world-wide Christianity. It is a great pity that there is no index. Specialists in various fields will regret the absence of some points—there is no reference, for instance, to the modern Christian attitude toward science or the literary criticism of the Bible—but the treatment throughout is objective and unbiased. The style is direct and the interest never flags. Here is *multum in parvo* of the right kind. H. A. GUY

*Life in a Medieval College*, by Frederick Harrison. (John Murray, 21s.)

The Chancellor of York Minster here traces the history of its vicars-choral from their first incorporation in 1252 to their dissolution in 1936. He has had unique opportunities for research, as he has served the Minster and cared for its records for over thirty years, and a good deal of this book is based on material never before made available. He is a scholar and a master in his field, but his book also shows the human touch and is full of good stories. The writing of it has been an act of *pietas*, for Canon Harrison was himself a vicar-choral. These vicars were clergy professionally concerned with the services in the nine 'secular' cathedrals. They began by being deputies (vicars) for the canons who did not wish to be tied to their cathedral duties all the year round. Many canons were absentees, and many were unable to sing the services! At York, therefore, in 1252 the vicars-choral were organized as a community, provided with an income, and lodged in a kind of secular monastery called the Bedern, which accommodated all thirty-six of them. This community constituted a 'college' in the old and strict sense. The book is a fascinating story of how these men got on with one another and with their superiors, how they behaved as landlords, and how they discharged their professional duties. The Reformation, of course, brought great changes, although not so great as those in the monastic cathedrals. The permission of the clergy to marry dealt a severe blow to the corporate life of the college. Archbishop Holgate in 1552 laid down new regulations for the vicars, one of which was 'that organ-playing do utterly cease', an injunction which held for nearly a century. In 1936, when the Church Assembly merged all minor corporations under one general fund, the college came to an end. A. VICTOR MURRAY

*A Protestant Manifesto*, by Winfred E. Garrison. (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, via The Epworth Press, \$2.75.)

The worst thing about this book is its name. We are led to expect an anti-Roman trumpet-blast. In fact we have a careful and competent survey of the main doctrines of Protestantism, preceded by a useful brief description of its manifold historical origins. Those of us who live a little nearer to the Continent of Europe than the author will detect an under-emphasis on the sacramental doctrines of the Reformers, and a singular innocence of the way in which sociology and religion 'play ball' with each other on the field of Church History. We should also like clearer evidence that the author had taken fully into account the modern Lutheran understandings of Lutheranism. But in spite of these defects, the positive part of the book can be safely recommended as an introduction to the distinctive tenets of the Protestant Churches. In the negative part, where the writer describes those things which Protestantism denies, he is not so happy. The Roman form of Catholicism has stronger and deeper roots than those which he unearths. But then we all tend to become somewhat ineffective when we set about stating and refuting the views of people with whom we have little or no sympathy. RUPERT E. DAVIES

*Grundtvig, An Introduction*, by P. G. Lindhardt. (S.P.C.K., 21s.)

When thinking of the Danish Church everybody in England has Kierkegaard in mind. His great and equally influential, though very different, contemporary, Nikolai Fredrik Severin Grundtvig (1783-1872), is much less known in this country. Professor Lind-

hardt is a Danish expert who is well acquainted with Church life in England, and knows how to draw illuminating parallels. There is a sympathetic Introduction by the Dean of Chichester, and Publisher's Notes warn against misunderstandings that might arise from differences in terminology. Grundtvig's struggles were many, and he had a long way to go to make his 'Unparalleled Discovery'. All this, including the important part played by his visits to this country, is set out exceedingly well. His struggle for the liberty of the Church, the idea of his High School, and the subsequent history of Grundtvigianism are recorded in a most instructive way. Everything is firmly based on the primary sources, and the author, an experienced teacher of Church History, brings to life whatever he touches on. Again, we see Grundtvig's British contemporaries with his eyes. This book is a memorable *saga*.

PETER KATZ

*An Album of Methodist History*, by Elmer T. Clark. (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, via The Epworth Press, \$7.50.)

This volume contains nearly a thousand pictures, and an interesting and accurate text, though the phrase 'religiously negligent' as applied to early Methodists in New York seems a little compressed. The beginnings of Methodism are fully depicted, and some space is accorded to British expansion overseas. The book is heavily overweighted on the American side. For instance, 'Wesley's Successors' in England *have* continued beyond the Benjamin Gregory who was President in 1879; a half-page of text, and no pictures at all, cover 'British divisions and reunion'. In contrast, there seem to be pictures of all the American Bishops who have ever been, and there is a full 'picturization' of American reunion. There are pictures of many American Book-rooms, but none of the first Book Room—and so on. Yet this sumptuous volume is of absorbing interest.

FRANK CUMBERS

*Principles of Social and Political Philosophy*, by Sir Ernest Barker. (Oxford Press, 25s.) In this 'testament of old age', Sir Ernest Barker has expanded the substance of an annual series of lectures last given in 1938-9, but it has so altered in the process that Sir Ernest himself doubts whether those who heard the lectures would recognize that the book is their embodiment. It is both a timely and relevant, and a sound and penetrating piece of work, which deals with issues that are today at the centre of the ferment of thought—e.g., the future shape of human society, the claims of the State, and the obligations of justice and law. The writer brings the clear light of reasoned understanding to bear on confusions of thought and conflicts of divergent interests, and sets up a well-founded body of principles by which judgement can be guided. Sir Ernest is probably the best living exponent of the *Politics* of Aristotle, and he introduced Gierke to British political thinkers. He is a fine and convinced interpreter of democracy as 'government by discussion'. The sweep of his argument is fascinating. As 'keynote' the Preamble to the Constitution of India adopted in November 1949 opens the book. Two of its seven divisions deal with the distinction between Society and State, first historically, then theoretically. Sir Ernest shows with emphatic clarity that the two are not to be identified, the State being an organ of Society, but not Society itself. That is the error of totalitarianism. Then come two divisions dealing with 'the Purpose of the State and the Idea of Justice' and 'the Rights secured by the State'. Two others are devoted to the reciprocal relations of the citizen and government, bringing out both the ground of political obligation and the governmental duty of protecting the rights of the individual. Space only allows for three brief comments. The author rejects Religion, along with 'Nature' and Economics, as sources of the idea of Justice, finding its ground in Ethics. Has the sense of right an independent ground, or does it find its ultimate validity in the nature of God? On the other hand, I welcome Sir Ernest's discussion of the way liberty, equality and fraternity (i.e. co-operation) qualify and limit one another, and his attempt to bring all three under the regulating principle of justice. Finally, I found his discussion of Rousseau's

concept of the 'general will' one of the most illuminating interpretations of that elusive phrase I have ever encountered. To quote his conclusion in his own words: 'We may say that, as the result of a *long-time* process of thought, moving in the area of Society and being therefore a process of *social* thought, there emerges a *common conviction which is also a general will* about a right order of human relations and the obligatory nature of that order'. Between the calm judicial discussions of these pages and the heats of political controversies there is a great gulf. One could wish that every citizen who takes part in 'government by discussion' had some grounding in these 'principles of social and political obligation.'

E. C. URWIN

*The Modern Rival of Christian Faith, an Analysis of Secularism*, by Georgia Harkness. (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, via The Epworth Press, \$2.75.)

While Dr Harkness's book, a lively and vigorous piece of writing, is primarily intended to shake the complacency and quicken the zeal of the American layman, it will also interest those British readers who want to know how contemporary problems—religion and science, the Christian doctrine of work, nationalism, liberal theology—strike a shrewd American mind. Her book, however, is *not* 'An Analysis of Secularism'. She has seven pages on 'What Is Secularism?' but it is not until she has given some sixty to Christianity that we come back to the former. Then, in less than seventy pages, scientism, humanism, democracy, nationalism, racism, fascism, capitalism, and communism are all reviewed—and we return to Christianity. In effect, no more is said of secularism in its several forms than is absolutely necessary to provide a setting in which Christian privilege and responsibility can be emphasized. In the section on scientism, etc., the treatment is sometimes so condensed as to be patchy, but the parts on democracy and racial discrimination are excellently done. On capitalism and communism Dr Harkness is not so much at ease, and falls back wisely on the reasonable generalities of Amsterdam. Many comments in the analysis of Christian faith and behaviour are familiar here as well as in America. Among the good things there is a searching chapter on prayer, and a very wise passage on 'evangelism and education'. To me the most disappointing chapter is on 'Work'—the usual irrelevant stuff about craftsmanship. Right through Dr Harkness sets provocative questions to American Christians, and then inspires them to practise the answers.

EDWARD ROGERS

*Philosophers Lead Sheltered Lives*, by J. K. Feibleman. (Geo. Allen & Unwin, 25s.)

This book, we are told, is an account of how the author, long a business man, came to be a philosopher; it is a 'parable' of the inevitability of philosophy even in an uncongenial environment. Had this purpose been fulfilled, the result would have been most interesting. Instead we have been given, on a thin autobiographical framework, an unconnected series of rather facile reflexions *de omnibus et quibusdam aliis*. Philosophy scarcely appears. The book has no unity, and it is hard to see for what readers it is intended. T. E. JESSOP

*Praying Together*, by Rupert E. Davies. (The Epworth Press, 6s.)

The prayers and litanies in this little book were written for services in Kingswood School Chapel, but nearly all of them would serve for more general use. While full of sound thoughts and suitable subjects, their manner is not always as good as their matter. Sometimes they are a little didactic; sometimes too analytical; and not infrequently they turn from addressing God in the second person to speaking about Him in the third, and the sense of immediate intercourse with Him is lost. The style is clear, straightforward, and modern, and it is a relief not to be distracted by self-conscious literary graces; Mr Davies does not use the antique vocabulary so often thought suitable for devotion, and the result is a great gain in freshness and reality; yet to neglect the sound and rhythm of words and the vividness of the concrete image, especially when embodied in familiar biblical phrases,

is to lose much of devotional value. The result is that, although these prayers admirably express ideas, they hardly express feelings; they stir thought, but do not kindle devotion. The best parts of the book are the suggestions for directed prayer (where it is the congregation that is being addressed), and those prayers that involve self-examination (for there the analysis of conduct and motive is very important). Indeed, the whole book, if used as a source of material for prayer rather than as prayer itself, is full of suggestion and help.

J. ALAN KAY

*The Reality of Heaven*, by Geoffrey F. Nuttall. (Independent Press, 6s.)

*Your God is Too Small*, by J. B. Phillips. (The Epworth Press, 7s. 6d.)

*Noughts and Crosses*, by Wilfred Shepherd. (The Epworth Press, 6s.)

The first two books both examine the popular connotation of the theological terms 'God' and 'Heaven', and then attempt to satisfy a certain current wistfulness by building up adequate conceptions. Each provides a new approach, but, whilst Mr Phillips uses a rather flippant treatment and dismisses objections somewhat cavalierly, Dr Nuttall progresses cautiously, and one feels that here is a matured judgement. There are logical lapses in both. Mr Phillips's style of writing and method of treatment are used to deal with a certain 'set' and are not to be judged by the preferences of an older generation, though the latter would be glad of any clarification of notions about Heaven. Whether they will find it here or not, is questionable. The conclusion reads: 'The divine Shepherd has eternity. And He seeks until He finds. . . . And when He has found the sheep He seeks, He puts it on His shoulders, rejoicing, and comes home. And home is heaven.' The third book contains sixteen thought-full sermons, simple and attractive, in plain nervous English (frequently staccato), without purple patches or rhetoric or perorations. They would be even better without resort to 'apt alliteration's artful aid', colloquialisms, and forced epigrams. The case for Overseas Missions is put wholeheartedly—and concisely—in six pages.

HAROLD MALLINSON

*Who's Who in Methodism*. (A. N. Marquis Co., Chicago, £6).

This single volume gives brief accounts of Methodist ministers, laymen and laywomen. They are mostly Americans, and are chosen from every walk of life. The book has been issued in the afterglow of the Ecumenical Conference with the approval of the International Methodist Historical Society. It is a careful but not always accurate account of the people concerned. Subsequent issues will amplify the long list of those whose records were received too late for insertion and correct obvious errors. The American terms used in compilation are foreign to us, as for instance, 'interimistic' and 'compilative', but once these are understood, the volume with more than twenty thousand inches of closely printed material, will serve a useful purpose.

J. HENRY MARTIN

*As the Sun Climbs*, by Rita F. Snowden. (The Epworth Press, 8s. 6d.)

This book is an autobiography of an intrepid New Zealand woman written in an unusual style. It gives a racy account of the author's life, in which adventure is interspersed with many excerpts from writers living and dead, together with some homiletics. There is no need to commend it to Rita Snowden's many readers.

J. HENRY MARTIN

*The Protecting Power*, by Eugen Speir. (Skeffington, 10s. 6d.)

This is a poignant account of a Jewish political suspect who at the beginning of World War II was taken from his family and interned first in England, then in Canada, and finally in the Isle of Man.

J. HENRY MARTIN



# From My New Shelf

BY C. RYDER SMITH

*The Nature of the Church*, edited by R. Newton Flew; *Inter-Communion*, edited by Donald Baillie and John Marsh (S.C.M. Press, 21s. each). These are two of the volumes that Commissions of the World Conference on Faith and Order have prepared for 'Lund 1952'. Both include contributions from leading scholars of all the larger Churches, except that Dr Flew, the Pope having forbidden collaboration, has himself written under 'The Church of Rome', ably gathering the pronouncements of Popes and others into a unity. One-third of his volume comes from America, where a committee has characteristically proceeded by *questionnaire*—and not all the contributors find this yoke to fit! This volume presents, as far as is possible, authoritative accounts of the teaching of the several Churches. It is otherwise with the second volume, for under the *theology* of Inter-Communion few Churches have even begun to integrate their doctrine. This volume begins with the Commission's report; then there are four 'historical studies', dealing with given periods (and an appendix on 'Existing Rules and Customs'); and then there come fifteen 'independent essays' by various scholars (including a Roman Catholic), where each writer 'speaks for himself'. The serious student of the problems of Reunion, asking 'Where are we now?' and bewildered amid the spate of books and pamphlets and articles, will find all that he needs on two of the chief subjects in these volumes.

*Christianity in European History*, by Herbert Butterfield (Collins, 7s. 6d.). These three Riddell Memorial Lectures seem to be printed just as they were delivered, for there is no preface or index or citation of authorities, except that the lecturer twice agrees with Acton in passing, and once disagrees with Professor Toynbee. But Professor Butterfield's many gifts all show themselves in this short book, especially in the clarity and balance with which, like some great judge, he 'sums up' many a complex case. He pricks some bubbles as he goes along. It is very difficult to summarize a book that is itself a summary—though it does not read like one—but perhaps the following jejune statement will serve to indicate most of the lecturer's chief findings: (a) In the creation and maintenance of every civilization religion has played a large and even a decisive part. This was so with Christianity in Europe for more than a thousand years. (b) Where religions are alike, the concomitant civilizations will tend to be alike. The distinctive element in a religion, on the other hand, will make one civilization different from another. In Christianity the distinctive element is the belief that God so values every person that in Christ He offers him eternal life. In all its history the Church has never wholly failed to preach this Gospel. (c) This message may seem to be other-worldly, but, as it declares the value of personality *here and now*, it inevitably has a meaning for 'mundane' affairs. For instance, as the Church has the 'cure of souls', it ought not to be the mere tool of the State. Historically, however, it was only in the West that the Church secured its independence as over against the Empire (i.e. the State). Again, every religion produces its own ethic—that is, an account of the way in which men should behave here and now. The distinctive ethic of Christianity, rooting in the belief that God loves every man, is that men ought to show 'love' and 'charity' to each other here and now. (d) Every religion, including Christianity, has applied its spiritual or other-worldly creed *imperfectly* to mundane affairs. This is sometimes because the latter are intractable; sometimes because Christians have made mistaken applications of their creed; sometimes because, moral obliquity surviving in themselves, they have refused to apply it; and sometimes because, having made an application pertinent to one period, they have continued to make it when it is no longer so. The imperfection of Christians' application of their own ethic has a great example in the refusal of all the Churches, when they have obtained liberty for themselves, to allow it to others. The doctrine of the freedom of conscience is inherent in Christianity, yet it had to be forced upon the Church. (e) In the 'Great Secularization', which began in the

seventeenth century and still continues, men have claimed autonomy for science and art and politics and commerce and so on—that is, they have separated liberty from its spiritual roots. Yet many of them have tried at the same time to retain the Christian ethic. This ethic, however, being now also rootless, has withered away in Stalinism, is withering away in many parts of Christendom, and perhaps in all. (f) Today, as always, the *prime* duty of the Christian and the Church is to bear witness unflinchingly to the spiritual message of Christ. But with a book where almost every sentence is packed with meaning, any summary is a lame affair. The only way to do justice to the masterly brevity of these lectures is to read them.

*Christianity Past and Present*, by Basil Willey (Cambridge Press, 10s. 6d.). If I may use the word 'culture' in its true sense, a man of culture here passes on, with the real modesty of such a man, certain lectures to other men of culture. Starting from Paul's account of the Gospel under the phrase 'To the *Greeks* foolishness', Professor Willey goes on to show what later men of culture have made of it, always asking the question, 'In what ways are their findings relevant today?', and always giving his answers in modern terms. Scholastics, Mystics, Humanists, Rationalists, Cambridge Platonists, Deists, Romantics, 'honest doubters', Agnostics—they are all here. At the end the lecturer returns to Paul, and, with help from Kierkegaard and still more from Coleridge, gives us his own definition of a Christian. It is the irreducible minimum, but it is the *right* irreducible minimum. If I may rob another word of its pejorative flavour, this is an excellent book for the *intelligentia*.

*The Study of the Gospels*, by H. A. Guy (Macmillan & Co., 6s.). In this book Mr Guy deals with the making and characteristics of the four Gospels, their varied presentation of the ministry of Jesus, the form and contents of His teaching, the Kingdom of God, the Son of Man, and related subjects. With his book on *The Life of Christ* it furnishes beginners with a clear, comprehensive, and concise account of what is called 'Introduction'. While the writer, whose opinions are occasionally rather extreme, sometimes notes the points where other scholars do not all agree with him, he does not always do so. While this simplifies, it may mislead. Apart from this, the book is wholly admirable. Of necessity it gives a compressed account, yet it moves easily and freely. The author has even found room to illustrate details from the Gospels themselves. The book, too, is arranged with great skill. Mr Guy not only tells beginners what to learn, but shows teachers how to teach.

*Alterations to the Text of the Synoptic Gospels and Acts*, by C. S. C. Williams (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 13s. 6d.). This is a book for experts. In it the author discusses every textual variation of any significance made for 'doctrinal, reverential, or other reasons'. Under the Virgin Birth he includes John 1.12. He sets out all the ancient evidence in great detail and quotes the opinions of many other recent scholars. The book is a valuable contribution to the study of *intentional* changes in the text.

*The Mystics of Spain*, by E. Allison Peers (Geo. Allen & Unwin, 9s. 6d.). For this volume in the 'Ethical and Religious Classics' series Professor Peers was the inevitable choice. In an informative introduction he shows, for instance, how all the great Spanish mystics, except Lull, belonged to the Golden Age of Spain—how many of them were friars—and how they never passed from the search for fellowship with God into pantheism. In the main part of the book the writer has translated passages from fifteen of the greatest of them. At this point his book becomes a book of devotion. Of course, Saint Theresa and St John of the Cross are the *dioscuri* of the constellation.

*A History of Philosophy*, by Frank Thilly, revised by Ledger Wood (Geo. Allen and Unwin, 40s.). For over thirty-five years the late Professor Thilly's *History of Philosophy* has 'maintained an undiminished popularity'. Professor Wood of Princeton has revised it and brought it up to date.

*Encyclopedia of Religion and Religions*, by E. Royston Pike (Geo. Allen & Unwin, 30s.). I have explored this handy encyclopedia pretty thoroughly, and, while I have noted sixteen small *quaerenda*, it seems to me that, by and large, the indefatigable author has done his work well. Under names of persons he begins with Adam and ends with the present Archbishop. A list of articles on a pair of pages will show something of his range: Gemara, Genesis, Genius, Geonim, George, Gerda, Gerizim, Germany (churches in), Gershom, Gerson, Ghazali, Gibbon, Gifford Lectures, Gilbertines, Giles, Gilgamesh, Girling, Gita-Govinda, Glassites.

*Radhakrishnan, an Anthology*, edited by A. N. Marlow (Geo. Allen & Unwin, 9s. 6d.). Sir Sarvépalli Radhakrishnan, of course, is a leading exponent of the belief that one doctrine lies behind all religions, and that every particular religion is only an imperfect expression of it. Mr Marlow arranges his anthology under thirty-four subjects, adding some epigrams. First, there are extracts under such ideas as 'The Nature of Reality', 'the Absolute', and 'the Personal God'; there follow a number of passages under 'Indian Thought', including Buddhism; finally, a number deal with 'the present situation and its needs'. Usually Professor Radhakrishnan does not argue, but pronounces, like an Indian *guru*. Indian words are not always translated, and at least a date might have been given for Indian sages, but this anthology illustrates very well the chief elements in the teaching of an eminent eclectic.

*The Development of English Theology in the Later Nineteenth Century*, by L. E. Elliott-Binns (Longmans, Green & Co., 8s. 6d.). In these Burroughs Lectures Dr Elliott-Binns deals with all the principal subjects of theology, with the important exception of social doctrine, to which there are only passing references. It might have displaced the last lecture, which is not much more than a long recapitulation. Except for an occasional allusion, 'English' does not here include 'Scottish'. But the lecturer has done his work well. For instance, he quotes from many and various contemporary sources (but without an index of names), and he sets his subject clearly in the context of the period, and especially in the context of the religious ideas of ordinary men. A very useful book.

*The English Free Churches*, by Horton Davies (Home University Library, Oxford Press, 6s.). It is very difficult to include the English Presbyterians, the Congregationalists, the Baptists, the Quakers, and the Methodists in one short volume, for it was only in the nineteenth century that they began to be aware of their spiritual unity (which may be defined as a belief in a 'gathered community', with all that this involves). This, no doubt, explains why, especially in its earlier part, Dr Davies's book, like its predecessors, is not so much history as annals. But, though not quite infallible, he is a very competent annalist. (In my copy the binders have made a medley of the pages in the last chapter.)

*A Man of the Word—the Life of G. Campbell Morgan*, by Jill Morgan (Pickering & Inglis, 18s. 6d.). Campbell Morgan, expositor and orator, was one of the three greatest preachers that I have ever heard. On both sides of the Atlantic he 'went everywhere, preaching the word'. Sometimes he also served a local church, notably at Westminster Chapel, with its famous Bible School. Before talking about a Bible Book he liked to read it through fifty times! The theme of this 'Life' is, of course, 'the preacher'. But its writer, a daughter-in-law, has drawn skilfully on the memories of family and friends, on letters, and on a diary that Dr Morgan kept for sixty years, making comments as he went along. So he emerges 'in the round'. For instance, for him, wherever he wandered, there was 'no place like home'—or again, he loved fun and cross-word puzzles, and he was an adept mimic! There are many good stories, but I haven't space for one. Campbell Morgan was once a candidate for the Wesleyan Ministry, and he believed that he was rejected because of a sermon-report. Fifty years ago and more I heard Ministers say that it was 'on medical grounds', but more things than one may have counted. The life of this saint, as of others, leaves a Christian reader saying 'Rejoice! And again I say, Rejoice.'

*Forty Years and an Epilogue*, by Stephen Hobhouse (James Clarke & Co., 12s. 6d.). A reader of this book will learn that Mr Hobhouse is a vegetarian, a teetotaler, an antivivisectionist, an opponent of blood-sports, something of a homoeopathist, a believer in faith-healing, a Quaker, and a disciple of Boehme. He will read too of a marriage to a daughter of Benjamin Waugh, and of two earlier 'loves', which the writer calls 'celestial' and 'terrestrial'. But most of the book tells in detail of three things—of the life of the heir to an old 'landed' family till he went up to Oxford; of his 'Tolstoyan conversion', which led him at length to live *with* the poor and *like* the poor at Hoxton; and of his extreme pacifism, for which he spent two periods in gaol in the first World War. Mr Hobhouse has steadfastly followed his conscience wherever it has led him. He has written that rare thing, a *humble* autobiography. It is a book of 'confessions' as candid as Augustine's.

*Noel Buxton, a Life*, by Mosa Anderson (Geo. Allen & Unwin, 16s.). Noel Buxton saw 'the other side' with rare clarity. A wealthy man, he joined the Labour Party. A land-owner, he championed the rural labourer. He stood steadfastly for the rights of minorities everywhere. With a group of other able men, he believed that from the time of Sir Edward Grey onwards, British foreign policy, especially toward Germany, went astray, and with an indomitable assiduity he advocated a policy of 'moderation', year by year, crisis by crisis, war by war—almost wholly in vain. When he died, he left among his papers, 'a sad list, headed "My Lost Causes"'. His advice about the Balkans, which he knew intimately, was often asked—and not taken. He was no pacifist or impracticable idealist, maintaining that 'Christianity, reason, and common sense' all supported his policy. His biographer silently suggests that all the while he was right. Whether this be so or not, *noblesse oblige*, as his friend Dr G. P. Gooch suggests in a foreword, was Noel Buxton's unformulated but unremitting creed.

*By the Way, an Autobiography*, by Francis J. McConnell (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, via The Epworth Press, \$3.50). Bishop McConnell, the most eminent American Methodist Bishop in the generation now passing away, compares his life to 'a journey in a car'—but then he is a *chauffeur* with an eye for the significant fact, as, for instance, his many stories show. There are one or two slips—e.g., it was the Apostolic Succession that Bishop Headlam was 'unwilling to accept', not the Historic Episcopate. But in this book we see the vast Methodism of U.S.A., from the home to the General Conference, 'from the inside'. For instance, we learn that in practice episcopacy is now a kind of *limited* monarchy. There are intriguing side-lights, too—e.g., in U.S.A. a man who tries to 'pull wires' at a Methodist Conference is called a 'politician'.

*The Ten Commandments*, by Cosslett Quin (Lutterworth Press, 15s.). Like earlier exponents of the Decalogue, Mr Quin shows (a) that there is a large place for law in Christianity, (b) that each Commandment is one example of the application of a *principle* to life, and (c) that in the New Testament and later Christian history there are many other applications of the principle. But all this leads up to the many applications of the principles *today*. While he is a bit discursive now and then, and while I do not always agree with him in details, Mr Quin has covered the ground amply and ably. He approaches his subject from the standpoint of the 'I-Thou theology'.

*When the Angels have Gone Away*, by J. W. Townson (The Epworth Press, 6s.). This is a devotional book for ordinary Christians. Three quotations embody its message—'We are seen in our true colours . . . on our days of crucifixion', 'We do not need a new universe, but clearer vision', 'A defeated God is unthinkable'. These quiet talks are a cordial for discouraged Christians.

*The Fortunes of Faust*, by E. M. Butler (Cambridge Press, 30s.). In this, the third volume of Miss Butler's trilogy, she deals with Faust in literature, the last word being used in its widest sense. For instance, she includes a collection of Faust stories printed in 1587, and the word-books of puppet-plays (with Punch as chief puppet), as well as the masterpieces of Marlowe and Goethe. Since Goethe some fifty German writers, ending

with Thomas Mann, have tried their hands on the theme. Miss Butler arranges the mass of material under 'Traditional Fausts', 'Brave New Fausts', 'Interim Fausts', and 'Post-Goethean Fausts'. There are some lively illustrations.

### OTHER BOOKS RECEIVED

- The Principle of Authority* (reprint), by P. T. Forsyth (Independent Press, 18s. 6d.).  
*Biblical and Theological Studies*, by Benjamin B. Warfield (Presbyterian Publishing Company, Philadelphia, \$4.50).  
*The Moral Philosophie of the Stoicks*, by Guillaume du Vair, englished by Thomas James, edited by Rudolf Kirk (Rutgers University Press, New Jersey).  
*The Body, a Study in Pauline Theology*, by John A. T. Robinson ('Studies in Biblical Theology', S.C.M., 7s.).  
*Men Spake from God* (the Prophets), by H. L. Ellison (Paternoster Press, 10s. 6d.).  
*God Spake by Moses*, by Oswald T. Allis (Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 9s. 6d.).  
*My Servant Moses*, by George E. Hicks (Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 8s. 6d.).  
*Second Sight in Daily Life*, by W. H. Sabine (Geo. Allen & Unwin, 12s. 6d.).  
*A City Stirs* (London), by Ashley Smith (Cleaver-Hume Press, 12s. 6d.).

### BOOKLETS AND PAMPHLETS

*World Parish Pamphlets* (on Evangelism of various types), nos. 1 to 15, edited by W. E. Sangster and Colin A. Roberts (Epworth Press, 6d. each). . . . *Youth and Crime*, by Douglas A. Griffiths (Epworth Press, 6d.). . . . *How the Word is Made Flesh—Communicating the Gospel to Aboriginal Peoples*, by Eugene A. Nida (Princeton Theological Seminary). . . . *Serving in the Forces*, by H. F. Mathews; *Old Testament Stories Dramatized* (Noah, Goliath, Nehemiah), by J. E. Eagles; *Christians and Jews*, by William W. Simpson (Epworth Press, 1s. each). . . . *Johann Sebastian Bach as a Biblical Interpreter*, by William H. Scheide (Princeton Theological Seminary). . . . *A Catalogue of Selected Film-Strips* (Epworth Press, 6d.).

### NOTABLE ARTICLES IN PERIODICALS

- Rylands Library Bulletin*, March (Manchester University Press, 7s. 6d.).  
 Coleridge on the Growth of the Mind, by Dorothy M. Emmet.  
 The Old Testament in the Teaching of Jesus, by T. W. Manson.  
 Some Observations on the Damascus Document and the Dead Sea Scrolls (re their use of Scripture, etc.), by Bleddyn J. Roberts.  
*The International Review of Missions*, April (Oxford Press, 3s. 6d.).  
 Secularism as a Threat to Integral Life Unity among Non-Europeans, by G. Pilhofer.  
 The World Mission of the Church: the Contemporary Scene, by John Baillie.  
 School Evangelism Grows in Latin America, by Elizabeth M. Lee.  
 The Church of Christ in Japan, by Hallam C. Shorrock, Junr.  
 The Gospel to Communists, by Leonard Constantine.  
*The Hibbert Journal*, April (Allen & Unwin, 3s. 6d.).  
 God and the Positivists, by J. B. Coates.  
 The Sceptical Implicate of Religious Belief, by Geddes Macgregor.  
 Religion and 'Mental Health', by John Wren-Lewis.  
 The Claim to Finality, by A. Gordon James.  
*The Congregational Quarterly*, April (Independent Press, 4s. 6d.).  
 Culture and Politics, by Lynn Harold Hough.  
 Psycho-Analysis as Exorcism, by H. J. S. Guntrip.  
 A Reformer of the Reformed (John Robinson), by A. Appleton Packard.  
*The Journal of Theological Studies*, April (Oxford Press, 18s.).  
 The Eschatology of the Similitudes of Enoch, by Matthew Black.  
 Gnosis, by Rudolf Bultmann.  
 The Root *sh'r* and the Doctrine of the Remnant, by E. W. Heaton.  
 The Crown of Thorns in John 19:1-5, by H. St. J. Hart.  
*The Expository Times*, April (T. & T. Clark, 1s. 6d.).  
 A Vision of the Final Judgement (Revelations 20:11-15) by J. Hugh Michael.  
 The 'Scandal of Christianity' Reconsidered, by D. E. H. Whiteley.  
 The Just War (What is it?), by W. Lillie.



do, May

Miracles and the Supernatural, by Marguerite Crookes.

Constantin von Monakov, 1853-1931 (psycho-analyst), by Geraint V. Jones.

The Influence of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs on the New Testament, by A. W. Argyle.

*Scottish Journal of Theology*, March (Oliver & Boyd, 4s. 6d.).

The Relevance of the Old Testament for the Doctrine of the Church, by Robert Smith.

Baptism—Is Missionary Practice Inconsistent?, by William C. Young.

St Mark 4:1-24, Part II (especially *verr.* 11f), by C. E. B. Cranfield.

*The Journal of Religion*, January (University of Chicago Press, *via* Cambridge Press, \$1.75).

Theology and Unbelief, by Daniel Jenkins.

Reinhold Niebuhr as Prophet and as Philosopher of History, by Robert E. Fitch.

The Perception of Goodness, by Bernard E. Meland.

*Theology Today*, January (Princeton, *via* B. H. Blackwell, Oxford, 3s. 6d.).

The Bible and Modern Philosophy on the Meaning of Life (*via* Existentialism), trans. from Hans Hermann Walz.

Faith and Freedom in Existentialism: a Study of Kierkegaard and Sartre, by David E. Roberts.

Present Responsibility and Future Hope (Eschatology), by Nels F. S. Ferré.

The Miner of Coal and the Church of Christ (including Britain), by Richard C. Smith.

*Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas: Bulletin II*, (only obtainable *direct* from The Oxonian Press, Queen Street, Oxford, 5s. 6d., post free).

A Problem of Interpretation (the relation between historical criticism and Biblical theology), by C. H. Dodd.

The Western Text and the Theology of Acts, by P. H. Menoud.

Some Observations on the Semitic Background of the New Testament, by H. F. D. Sparks.

What was the Ascension?, by A. M. Ramsey.

*Studies in Philology*, January, 1952 (University of North Carolina Press, *via* Cambridge Press, \$1.50).

The Art of Dante's Purgatorio, by Helmut Hatzfeld.

Byron's Hebrew Melodies, by Joseph Slater.

# Our Contributors

F. H. ANGOLD  
PH.D., F.R.A.I., F.Z.S.,  
F.R.ECON.S., F.P.H.S.  
(ENG.) DIPLOMA

Lecturer to schools, Y.M.C.A., W.E.A., Adult Education Institute, Manchester. Extra Mural Department, University of Manchester (1941-8). Founder and Chairman of Philosophical Society of England (Manchester Group), formerly member of Council of Society (London) and Member of Editorial Committee. Clergyman, Ancient Catholic Church. Much deputation for British and Foreign Bible Society. Artist and Orientalist.

ARTHUR B. BATEMAN

Methodist Minister. Studied painting with Dame Laura and Harold Knight. Has exhibited at Royal Academy, Royal Scottish Academy, Paris Salon, etc.

TOM DRING

Methodist Minister. College revealed a gift for Logic and Moral Philosophy (was known as 'College Logician'). Ten years in Circuit work. Lent by Conference to British and Foreign Bible Society for twenty-eight years. Kept in touch with Philosophic thought and Scientific discovery throughout ministry. Regular contributor to the *Newcastle Press*, and book reviewer to the *Sunday Times*.

W. E. FARNDAL  
D.D.

Chairman of the Lincoln and Grimsby District, and a leader of Ministerial Groups and Associations. President of the Methodist Conference, 1947-8. Former Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council.

PHIL. J. FISHER

Methodist Minister. Formerly editor of *The Methodist Leader* and co-editor of *The Methodist Times and Leader*. Has published various books of devotion and worship and a volume of verse. One-time staff contributor to *The Academy*.

STANLEY BRICE FROST  
M.TH., PH.D.

Tutor in Old Testament Studies, Didsbury College, and Special Lecturer in Hebrew, Bristol University. Author of *The Pattern of Methodism*, and of the 1952 Fernley-Hartley Lecture, *Old Testament Apocalyptic, its Origins and Growth*.

W. S. HANDLEY JONES

Poet, essayist, literary critic. Author of *The Unveiling and Other Poems*, *It Crossed My Mind* (a volume of Essays), various pamphlets, and numerous articles in newspapers and reviews.

ATKINSON LEE  
M.A.

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